



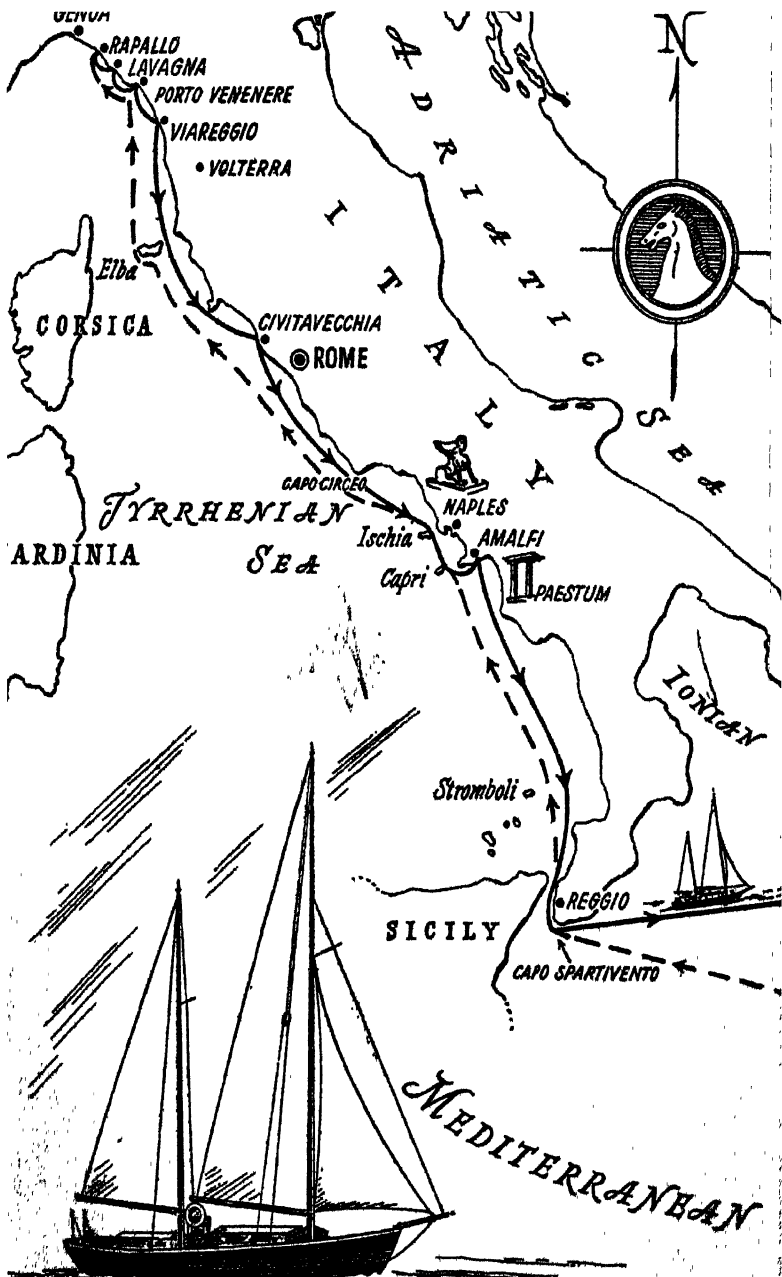
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# IN THE WAKE OF ULYSSES



# IN THE WAKE OF ULYSSES

BY GÖRAN SCHILDT

TRANSLATED FROM THE SWEDISH BY ALAN BLAIR

*With photographs and endpaper map*

DODD, MEAD & COMPANY · NEW YORK

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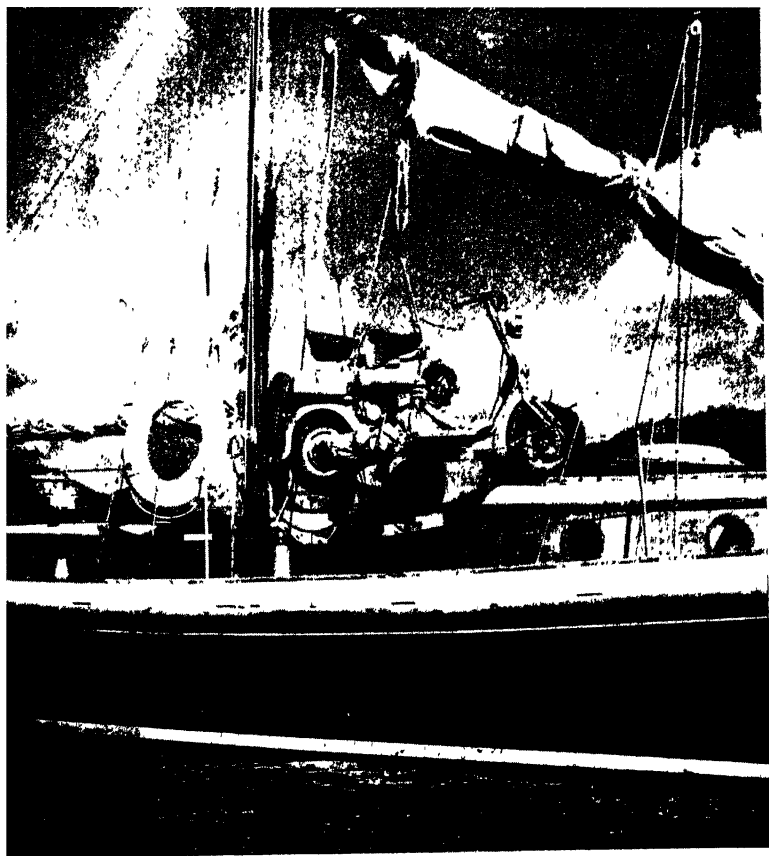


## PHOTOGRAPHIC SUPPLEMENT





The coast of Ithaca, the home of Ulysses, from Mount Aëtos.



(above) Our new traveling companion, the Lambretta, is taken aboard.



(left) Roberto's drawing in Daphne's guest book.



(left) The beds are made up under the stars in Arcady.



(below) Demosthenes and Mona at Mycenae.



The sacred region of Olympia.

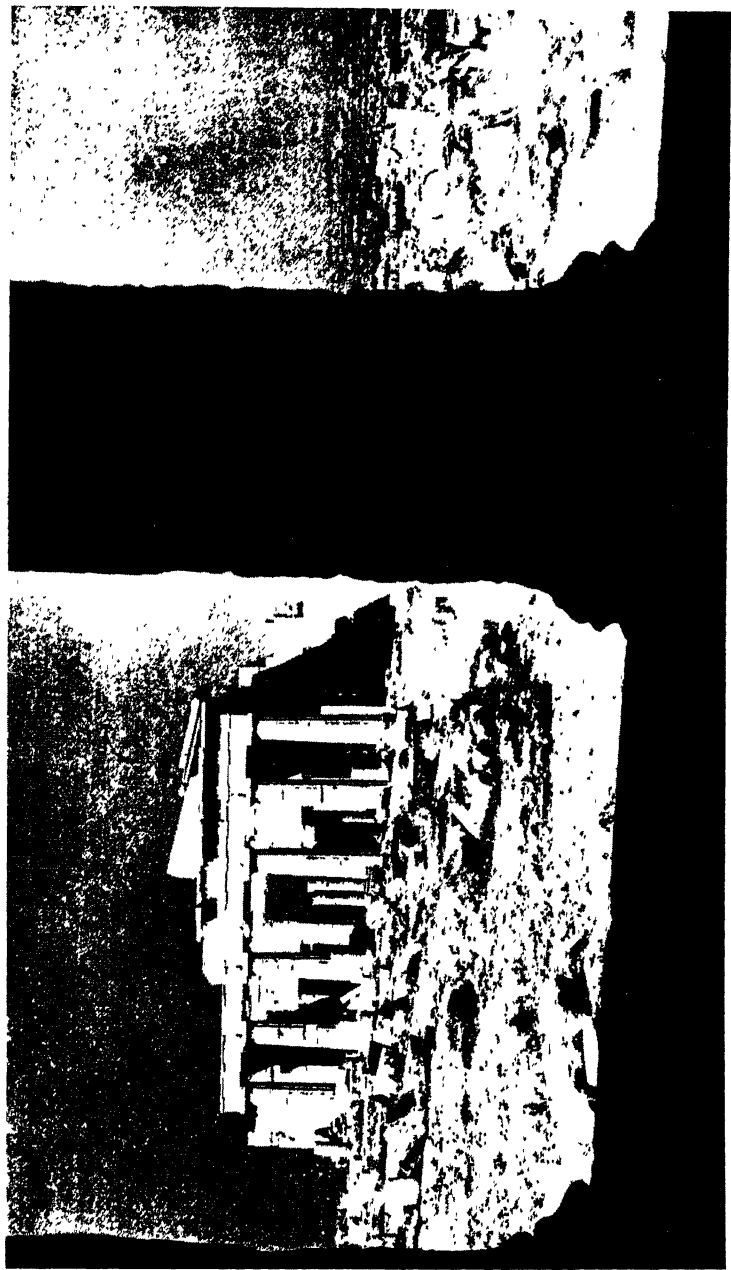


The view from the theater at Delphi over Apollo's temple and the Pleistos valley.



The theater at Epidauros.





From the Acropolis at Athens: the Propylaea.



(top) The Psaras family's house by the shore.  
(bottom) From the Feast of the Madonna on Tinos.



Windmill on Mykonos.



The priest beneath the cathedral bells of Naxos.



(top) The church of Hagia Irini on Ios.

(bottom) Meeting on the road to Neapolis: the priest riding home from Sunday service.



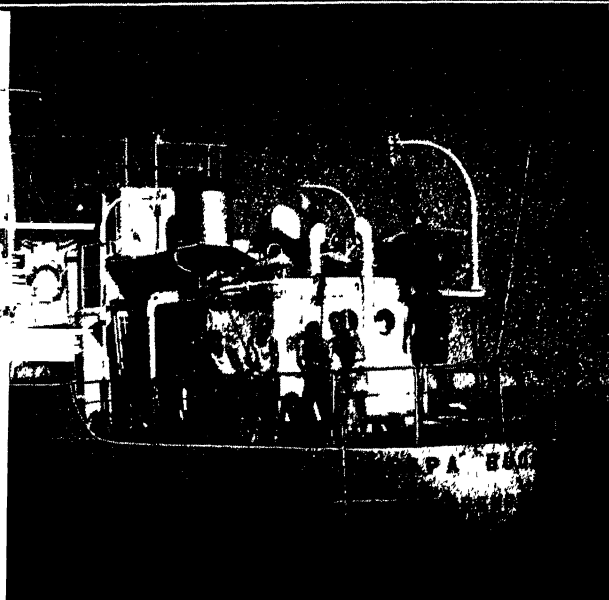
The steps up to Fira on Santorin. Notice *Daphne* lying off the quay.



The Royal Palace at Knossos, Crete.



Grape harvest on Crete.





IN THE WAKE OF ULYSSES



## THE SHIPYARD AT LAVAGNA

IN THE SUMMER of 1948, when the ketch *Daphne* steered her way down from the bleak north to the Mediterranean through the vineyards, leafy woods and cathedral-crowned cities of France, her two owners were firmly convinced that the voyage was to be the one great exception in their lives. Our intention was to take the boat back to home waters and ourselves to everyday life the following summer, either on the prosaic deck of a steamer or possibly by means of another canal trip. What ignorance of human nature lay behind this idea! We just did not realize that the most dangerous thing man can do is to taste the possibility of happiness: having once done so, he continually demands new doses. Saint Peter is both wise and compassionate in never allowing sinners to make a holiday tour in Paradise; it would afterward be their most bitter torment. In 1948 we found our paradise. To forgo it voluntarily has been out of the question, even if we have asked ourselves now and then if it is permissible to be so carefree.

So *Daphne* has already remained for three years by this Mediterranean that has spellbound us beyond hope. We ourselves, it is true, have dutifully taken the train home to Stockholm every autumn—the train that daily rushes past the wide-open beach in Rapallo Bay where our ship lies the long winter through under her green tarpaulin. But just as the miner down in his shaft draws strength and courage from the thought of his girl up above in the sunlit world—young, pretty and *his*—in the same way we, in our daily grind in the shafts formed by the buildings of a big city, gain assurance from the thought of our loved one, warming herself light-

heartedly in the Italian winter-sunshine on this beach where the fishermen dry their nets on the pebbles all year round. We know that she is waiting for us faithfully until the snow has vanished from the peaks of the Apennines and the first fireflies begin to flit between the sleeping hulls on warm, dark May evenings. Then comes a day when the sea looks bluer and more smiling than ever to the dazzled passengers on the Northern Express, an afternoon when the small bays, fringed with stone pines, which can be glimpsed between the tunnels are a glittering and crystal-clear proof of life's endless riches.

The first night in *Daphne's* cramped cabin with the sound of the dark and surging sea outside the door brings sober reflection and fitful sleep. Faced with stark reality, we are suddenly aware that sailing on the Mediterranean is not purely an idyll of delight, and that our immediate future is full of hardship, uncertainty and lurking peril. But what doubts can hold their ground against the glorious, calm morning that follows the night? Our first dip in the Mediterranean utterly reconciles us to our situation.

We have already experienced two such springtime reunions on the beach at Lavagna and three autumn farewells, which have also been very alike. Hardened and sunburned after being out of doors for four months on end, drenched with sun into our very souls, satiated with sea air, rapture and new impressions, we have come ashore here with a longing for the northern autumn darkness, the winter cold and the four walls of our study which has been almost as intense as our springtime longing to come south. It is difficult to say which of our summers has been the best. Nothing has surpassed the pleasure of getting to know the canals and rivers of France—that summer bordered with green trees and Gothic cathedrals, arched with slender bridges, full of country scents, the croaking of frogs and the cool splashing from the locks. Nor has anything excelled the sheltered bays of Corsica with their wild, romantic atmosphere of brigands, and the desolate coastline of Sardinia, with ancient cities drowned in the sea yet clearly visible through the

water beneath our keel. This second summer, which took us to the quiet beauty of the Balearic Islands and the grandiose coastal towns of Spain, stands out in my mind as one long sunshine cruise between palm-decked harbors and orange groves on an ever friendly sea. The third summer's voyage, which I shall describe in this book, offered neither palms, oranges nor constant fine weather. It had a more pungent savor of bitter salt spray around sunbaked islands and rural poverty among crumbling temple ruins; but for that very reason it was perhaps the most memorable.

Before I begin the story of our sailing adventures, however, I should like to tarry for a little in the shipyard at Lavagna. *Daphne* has given us not only freedom of movement on our journeys but also—during the time she has lain ashore—the feeling of a settled home which the possession of a small villa on the Ligurian Riviera can bestow. With her modern little kitchen, her refrigerator, her comfortable beds, her cozy cabin and her roomy cockpit under the awning, she is an unusually nice little villa, in fact, and no one can complain of the position. The finest of beaches is only a few yards away, a small river mouth with clear, fresh water is almost as near, and it is not far to the two nearest villages of Lavagna and Chiavari: Mona walks there with her market basket in less than a quarter of an hour. Electricity and water we lay on from the shipyard's office building close at hand; the only slight inconvenience is the tall ladder we have to climb down and up. Moreover, we should not be without neighbors if ever we decided to winter in Lavagna: on several of the large adjacent boats sailors live all the year round, they are permanently employed by the boat owners and potter about during the winter with painting and repairs.

Mona, who has a craftsman's patience and considers I'm a slacker, is responsible for painting everything above the water line, while I have to make do with scraping, painting the bottom and

other rough work.

Life in the shipyard at Lavagna is somewhat different from conditions in Scandinavia and has but few of the curses usually attendant on industrialism. I think this is due not to backwardness, as is often stated, but on the ineradicable ability to make life pleasant and gay which is the Italians' cultural inheritance from the Etruscans. In Italy work is seldom a mechanical task accepted with indifference, a means of getting rich or earning your living. You get rich in other ways: through a lottery, a legacy or more or less shady deals. As for your livelihood, that's up to Providence: no Italian has ever hesitated to have children out of fear that he will not be able to support them. Work, therefore, is a form of life more than anything else, a way of living, and as the Italian normally enjoys living he also enjoys his work. The shipyard at Lavagna is least of all a place to which the workers come reluctantly at a given time and which they leave with relief the minute they can. Strange though it may sound, neither the owners of the yard, the brothers Sangermani, nor their thirty workers seem to know a more pleasant spot in which to spend their leisure than their place of work.

After the day's work most of the men stay behind and on Sundays both they and the shipyard owners gather stanchly on the beach. This surprised us at first, as according to our northern notions a drudge should try to obliterate, at least on the Sabbath, even the thought of his place of torment. The explanation must be that the Italians, who compared with us are socially bound to such a marked degree, have coalesced in their place of work into a whole of such strength that they cannot think, speak or feel except within its frame. While we northerners go about like hermits among our equals, taken up with our work, ourselves and our private ambitions, the Italian functions entirely as a member of a community in open contact with both friends and enemies. The clearest proof of this interdependence was a boy who had formerly been employed at the yard but had been dismissed for theft. Most evenings he came

creeping back, always to be met with the greeting: "Here comes our thief," and he had so far accepted this role that his position in the group was just as assured as that of the communistic agitator or the painter scoffed at as a cuckold.

Warm, dark May evenings in Lavagna, how shall I describe your melting, slightly theatrical charm? Dinner out on deck by the light of the kerosene lamp, while the palms rustle in the night breeze and out at sea the innumerable spear-fishing boats glow like a far-off city. Infallibly, as though nature's yearning sublimity itself gave voice, someone in the darkness begins a song about *amore* and *la luna*, two themes which are not especially far-fetched, as down by the water's edge where the sand is firm and wet girls are walking arm in arm, while the moon carves a glistening path across the sea. We too often go for a walk along the beach, which continues unbroken four and a half miles all the way to Sestri.

For the last part of the ritual belonging to a happy Lavagna day, we go to see the shipyard's night-watchman, Piero Sangermani's father-in-law, who is sitting, together with his dog, smoking his pipe in full view of the sea. He is a thinking man of quite another kidney from the others at the yard. When you talk to him you realize all at once that the average Italian is intelligent, ready-witted and alert but completely innocent of the kind of monologues with oneself which we in Scandinavia like to call thinking. Old man Jourdin's thoughtfulness is no doubt due in part to his job, to solitude during the long nights, but also to the fact that he was born in Italian Savoy. In the northern parts of all countries there is a more solid, reserved type of person and in the southern a more unrestrained and lively type, even though the north Italian lives on the same latitude as the southern Frenchman and the Prussians adjoin the southerners of Scandinavia, the Danes. In us the night-watchman has recognized kindred souls who understand both

his philosophy of life under the starry sky and the French dialect of his childhood, which he cannot even speak with his own Italianized children. Our evening talks are therefore long and full of interest; one of Jourdin's favorite topics is his youth, when he worked as a pageboy at a big tourist hotel in the Alps. It was long before the turn of the century and the guests consisted mostly of consumptive young men and pale beauties from the four corners of Europe, who tried to numb the anxiety caused by their merciless disease by filling the empty days at the Alpine hotel with hectic romances and cunningly contrived love affairs. The old man is a born storyteller; one faded and aristocratic silhouette after the other comes to life with his words—it is as though flowers in a herbarium, withered long since, half woke up, as if for a brief minute they came alive again with dew-drops on their slender leaves and a discreet scent among their petals, without quite being able to free themselves from the artificial positions given them by the herbarium-paster. An inflection as some young person, doomed to die, speaks of the unknown, a secret letter that the pageboy has smuggled to a youthful Grand Duchess, appear out of the past for a few short moments.

"Now they've all gone, the sick and the healthy both, the hotel has been rebuilt and I'm an old man. But the wonderful thing is that it's the same starry sky here and in Savoy, now and in my youth. You see, you sit thinking about one thing and another at nights," he adds rather apologetically. "Everyone needs something to hold on to, something homely that's always there. It hasn't been so easy since my wife died and the children got married, for I've never felt at home down here by the sea, and it was worse when my house was bombed during the war. Now there's nothing of the old left, I thought. Then I got this job with Piero and now I've found my way home—to the stars."

We could not help feeling moved by this confession, uttered by a simple man who has found in a changing world the same sure



haven for his soul as the astronomers and priests of ancient civilizations, as Pythagoras and Plato, Galileo and Newton. On former evenings we had felt rather disloyal and hard-hearted when about eleven o'clock we had left the old man alone out in the darkness and climbed on board to our snug little cabin. Now we were more inclined to think that after a visit in his home we should discreetly withdraw. And being a polite host he came with us right to the steps before being swallowed up in the darkness: the moon had gone down, sea and land were blotted out and the only thing visible was the huge, brightly sparkling sky.

I have described Lavagna as we found it more or less unchanged every spring and autumn we have been there. The particular spring which was the prelude to this book's adventures, it offered a novelty which partly revolutionized the summer: the admittance of a fourth member into the constellation of *Daphne*, Mona and the skipper. The newcomer was an elegant little Italian by the name of Lambretta, who took possession of the starboard bunk in the saloon. The minute we put out to sea she took her place here, reclining like a Roman lady and sharing our meals whenever we had them below deck, but when we were in port she stood mostly on the quayside, desired and admired with expert eyes by all the younger menfolk. Lambretta is a little motorcycle of the small-wheeled and stubbornly climbing type that swarms about in all Italian streets and has two equally comfortable seats.

We had long cherished a wish, "some time when we're rich and have an even bigger boat," to have some kind of vehicle on board. During our trip along the French canals our bicycles were always on deck ready to take us off on glorious outings, but when we got to Marseilles and started sailing again we could no longer have them with us. The idea of taking at least one of the bicycles to pieces and lodging it below deck had occurred to us, but evaporated when we

became familiar with the summer heat and the mountainous nature of the countryside in the south. Then came the spring of 1950. Soon after our arrival in Lavagna we were sitting at a street café in the town's little market place when a young man and his girl friend parked a Lambretta right beside us to drink an *espresso* as we were doing. It was then that it suddenly struck me: "Good Lord, how small it is! Just think, it might even . . ." I tried to project the hatch down to *Daphne's* cabin optically onto the beige-colored wonder that stood there, its nickel sparkling. But the price? We started talking to the young couple and got all the information we wanted plus a stream of praise for the vehicle. The price was only 125,000 lire, but Lambrettas are in such demand that you have to put your name down on a waiting list three or four months in advance. The young couple was very interested and came with us to the yard, where we took careful measurements. It turned out that a kindly Providence had checked the Lambretta designer's pencil a quarter of an inch below the maximum dimensions of the sliding top of *Daphne's* hatchway, and that the bunks in the saloon were one inch longer than the motorcycle. That evening we made many neck-breaking financial calculations and tried to convince ourselves that it would even mean a saving by not having to take trains, busses and above all expensive taxis to the archeological places of interest which, both in Italy and Greece, have an uncanny knack of lying well outside the towns. The matter was of such moment that we decided to take the bus in to Rapallo to our friends Roberto and Luisa Sambonet.

Roberto had got a shade fatter and had developed considerably as a painter since we had gone with him and Luisa to Genoa two years before and waved them off to Brazil. A whole array of canvases with Negro and jungle motifs stood propped up against the studio wall, powerful and individual things. Up to now we had mostly seen in Roberto a good friend and an uncommonly buoyant person. Now we found that he had become one of the best of Italy's

younger painters.

"Earthly possessions are nothing for an artist," he declared, apropos of the Lambretta, "but for that very reason it's a good idea for his friends to have them. We can go to Milan and talk to the Lambretta directors so that you can buy one without having to be on the waiting list. You can say you're a journalist."

The very next morning we took the bus into Milan and Roberto pleaded my cause so well that I was instantly given an order form to present at the factory. There we stood, the Lambretta, Roberto and I, outside the front of the half-mile-long factory in one of Milan's suburbs.

"Can you drive?" I asked hopefully.

"No, can you?"

I have never driven anything other than a horse and a bicycle. The only way out was to ask the factory's gatekeeper about the elementary moves. Starting was easy and after I had further learned how to change gear, brake and stop, I sat on the driver's seat, quaking somewhat, while Roberto, clasping a large suitcase, climbed on behind. Not until afterward did I fully realize what courage and unjustified confidence Roberto showed. It's no child's play, even for a hardened motorcyclist, to drive right across Milan at six in the afternoon when the traffic is at its worst. That we reached the railway station without any mishap to speak of, pale but composed, can only have been due to the fact that a whole squadron of guardian angels had been called out. They also had a full-time job energetically deflecting impeding lampposts, striking traffic-police with blindness and at the last second violently dispersing groups of people engaged in peaceful conversation or commerce, at whom we leaped like a veritable kangaroo when I muffed the gear-change. Roberto insisted on our taking the train to Rapallo and I admitted he was right. Neither the owner nor the engine was well enough run in to start on a 180-mile journey.

There remained the trip from Rapallo to Lavagna. It is a scant

twelve miles, but the road is hardly suited to a training-ground for an unpracticed driver. From the shore at Rapallo it climbs in hair-pin bends cut out of the actual rock-face up to a thousand feet before coming down to the beach at Lavagna. The view from the road across the Gulf of Rapallo toward the Portofino promontory opposite is among the loveliest in Italy, but obviously seems to have a stimulating effect on the already reckless Italian drivers. With the accelerator jammed down and the powerful engines singing a paean of freedom one super-streamlined car after the other comes rushing toward you at curves and in tunnels—to say nothing of the huge busses that force you out onto the very edge of the precipice. It was much worse than driving through Milan, but Mona and I somehow got home to *Daphne* unscathed. The very next day we tried out the best way of getting the Lambretta on board. We found that by fixing tackle onto the boom, this can be swung out like the arm of a winch. The Lambretta can then be lowered into the saloon and made fast to the starboard bunk so that she cannot move about in a heavy sea. We manage the whole operation between the two of us and we do not think the Lambretta spoils the interior at all. On the contrary, she imparts an air of Italian elegance to our Scandinavianly sober cabin, and besides, she is a good friend. The only drawback is that we now have only one guest bunk available on board, but this summer we were not bound by any invitations.

A launching is always a great event, a delivery, which in a few moments transforms a boat from an inanimate object into a living, independent being. In this respect a launching at Lavagna is even more radical than usual, in that the yard has no harbor and the boats must be got ready on land, so that they can be off the minute they touch the water. It is almost like starting on a balloon trip: provisions are taken on board, the water- and fuel-tanks are filled, all the gear is stowed away in its right place, the engine is tried out, the yard's account is paid and the customs hands over the ship's certificate. In the meantime the workers at the yard have built a runway of

logs across the beach down to the water. A ladder is raised against the boat's side, you press your friends' hands for the last time, climb up and check that everything is in order. Then with a certain quaking you give the agreed signal. Slowly, but soon with ever-increasing speed, *Daphne* starts gliding down toward her right element, while the workers, screaming and shouting, hang onto the long ropes behind to steer us down the greased runway. There is a tense second just as we gain the seashore: *Daphne* gives a lurch, but then docilely continues her run, the bowsprit dips and we suddenly feel that wonderful, soft movement—the inexpressible sensation of floating. Imperceptibly we have glided off the runway and are drifting slowly, curtsyingly, out toward the watered-silk infinity of the gulf, while away on the shore the workers are rushing about like flustered ants after a cone has dropped on the heap, all cheering like mad. There is only a light summer breeze blowing, but we cannot bring ourselves to start the droning engine; instead we hoist our sails and creep slowly past the villas and cliffs to Rapallo.

There are no doubt many reasons for the yachtsman's passion for his sport: the feeling of freedom, comradeship at sea, love of racing or long voyages, risks overcome; but judging by myself there is, below all the other factors, a primeval reason of a completely irrational kind. Sitting at the tiller again this lovely May day beneath the tall white sails and feeling the give and take between the gentle wind and the supporting embrace of the sea, I was prepared to admit that all poets and psychoanalysts are right in regarding water as a mystic and sacred element. Rimbaud's intoxicated boat, borne by the sea as by the river of life itself; Eliot's water symbolism, his myth of the waste land and the search for springs, rivers and seas as deliverers from spiritual drought; Freud's explanation that the sea, the primordial cradle of organic life, is a mother's womb to which we all long to return—all these images have a kernel of truth which is well

known to the practicing sea-mystic, the sailor. I myself have felt this pull to the water, this need of seeing water and being borne by water, ever since my early childhood. From the first primitive raft I nailed together, from the canoe I saved up for fanatically out of my weekly pocket money, from the rowboats with umbrellas as sails, to the gradually growing incarnations of real sailing vessels, the Boat has always been an essential part of my life. It is a torment for me to live where there is no shore and water, and when I was studying in Paris I could hardly let a day pass without going down to the Seine to look at the barges. The myth of Antaeus, who lost all his strength when no longer in contact with the earth, is true in another way of me: it is water I cannot live without. Just as in the lives of most people there is a definite situation which constantly recurs in one form or another, because they are bound to it by secret ties—one person is always traveling, another always bent over a cradle or a flower bed—I know that in my life the floating and navigating situation will persistently recur, even as a ferryman's work, perhaps, on a Siberian river.

It took us three hours to sail to Rapallo, where we anchored at sundown inside the little jetty among the row of elegant and considerably bigger yachts. The Gulf of Rapallo with its various harbors shelters the largest and most costly fleet of pleasure-boats in Italy, for to a great extent the nobility and industrial magnates of Milan, Turin and Genoa have their boats here. To tell the truth, however, it is a somewhat sleepy and static fleet. The southerner loves dangerous sports more than arduous ones, and it is hardly likely, even under other social conditions, that the Italians would take any interest in the development of cruising along their coasts. In the Mediterranean it is only Englishmen, northern Frenchmen and Belgians who undertake long cruises, while the southerners' own boats mostly lie still. Their function is partly to indicate the owner's opulence—possession of a yacht is generally regarded down here as the height of luxury—partly to give an opportunity to elegant womenfolk dur-

ing guaranteed fine weather of displaying their beach- and swimsuits and to elderly men of imbibing a little air between board meetings. The ones who really profit by the boats are the professional sailors, who live on board and in every harbor form an indolent corps of sunburned and eternally pessimistic weather prophets. Every cloud is for them a sign that it would not be wise to venture out, and every change in the barometer, both up and down, means just as surely that one is better off in port—something of which they have no difficulty in convincing the boat owners. The first summer we listened respectfully to these experts and so never moved outside the Rapallo Gulf; nowadays we have made friends with them and take them for what they are: Italians who have found their niche in life.

There are many gay reunions as soon as we have anchored, one sailor after the other “happens” to row past in his dinghy to have a chat and hear how far foreign lunacy extends this year—oh Greece, we thought of sailing to Corsica and the Balearic Islands. For it is all part of the game every spring to speak proudly of long cruises; then something always crops up to stop them. Roberto and Luisa, who have seen our arrival from their garden, come down too and the four of us set off for Santa Margherita to celebrate *Daphne's* launching, the spring and our friendship by having dinner at *Ristorante dei Pescatori*.

There may perhaps be stumbling blocks in the way of intercourse between people of different nationalities, tradition and temperament, but if a true understanding aids one in frankly accepting the other person the gain is all the greater. With Roberto I am always filled with surprise, curiosity, but also with admiration; I know few people who are so alive as he is. The northerner is apt to misconstrue the old myth about man's “natural” goodness and happiness and think of the Italian as living in a natural state, uneducated and socially backward, but happy as a child thanks to the country's blue sky and hot sun. More than anyone else, Roberto has taught me

that this "naturalness" of the Italians is the fruit of thousands of years of culture and that the social injustices in his country do not prevent a social contact between people which has no counterpart in other lands. The Frenchman thinks he is a democrat and preaches equality and fraternity, but in practice he strives with all means in his power to hold his own and keep aloof from his equals. The majority of Italians cling to the outer forms of an obsolete class society but in the matter of intercourse between individuals are the most democratic nation in Europe. To call one's maid Miss usually means only a meeting on convention's neutral ground. To discuss the justification of modern art for half an hour with the waiter at *Ristorante dei Pescatori*, like Roberto, just as seriously and naturally as he did five months later when we went together to see Fernand Léger in Paris, is true equality. Just as striking is Roberto's *presence* in his own sunny, smiling, corpulent frame—this very presence being also a typical Italian trait. Many people give the impression of being houses, admittedly with lights in the windows and smoke curling out of the chimney, but with no sign of the owner. There are many ways of keeping out of sight in such a house: either you can send one or two rigid Principles, one or two Doctrines borrowed from a neighbor, one or two permanently employed Opinions to receive the guest, who never gets any further inside than to this staff of servants, or you can hide in the cellar and leave all the doors open—you are too "tired," too "uninspired" to meet the guest. The comfortable thing about someone like Roberto is that he always receives you himself and that he is fully responsible for what he does, both well and not so well. Such people make their environment genuine merely by existing.



## ETRUSCAN COAST

DAPHNE has twice sailed along the Riviera coast with its stubborn calm. The first time was in 1948, when we steered from Marseilles to Rapallo after our canal trip. The second time was in the autumn of 1949 on our way home from the considerably brisker Spanish waters. Had we not been helped along in both cases by a strong *mistral* we, like others, would no doubt have had to resort to our engine. *Daphne* has a good and powerful one, though we only press the starter in emergency. This restraint may be foolish, as by using the engine more often we could save ourselves a lot of trouble, but to our way of thinking cruises along the Mediterranean's open coast are both too easy and insufferably monotonous if made by engine. For us the whole adventure lies in the incomparable feeling of being borne along in league or in conflict with the elements—in other words, of sailing. At the same time I cannot stress too strongly that an engine is essential if one wants to sail on the Mediterranean without great inconvenience. There is no archipelago here as a protection from the swell, and whoever is left lying with a little boat slopping about in a dead calm not only loses his temper and his night's sleep but also runs considerable risks: dead calm and swell often precede the changes in the weather and local storms which are ten times more violent here than at home with us. To run before a strong wind into unknown and crowded harbors, where as a rule one has to tie up at the quay side, is not very pleasant either, especially if the crew is as limited as *Daphne's*. The engine is our paid crew, our marine insurance and our comforting last resort—but certainly not our first.

The question was very much to the fore when our great start for the summer was imminent. The common-sense thing, of course, would have been to use the engine from Rapallo down to the Arno delta, where the Apennines turn inland and fresher breezes blow, but the thought of starting our Greek trip so ingloriously was rejected with contempt. It must be possible to break out under sail from the magic ring of indolence that holds the Rapallo boats captive in their gulf. Full of confidence we made ready for sea on this morning of June 6th. The sliders on the sails were fed into the tracks in the masts, the Lambretta was put to bed in the saloon, the refrigerator was filled with meat, vegetables and fruit—including the first figs and apricots, bought by Mona in the market—and Roberto and Luisa came down to say good-by. We had hoped that they would come with us for a week or two, but Roberto was working on a picture he wanted to get finished and Luisa was, I think, afraid of seasickness. All we managed to elicit was that Roberto, if his picture was finished, would intercept us in Civitavecchia.

"After some hours a slight breeze fortunately wafted us out of the gulf and we headed due south across a sea so blue that it seemed almost black. Everything was a festival for us this first day, which restored our Eden to us in full measure. We had put on our paradise suits and put up an awning over the cockpit. Mona made out she was caulking cracks in the deck with rubber cement, though it was rather the pale cracks left in her sun-tan by the swim-suit which were caulked, and the skipper resumed with sensuous pleasure a bodily position practiced a previous summer which allowed him three delights at the same time: steering with the feet, lying stretched out comfortably, and settling down to D. H. Lawrence's charming book on Etruscan places. Hour after hour went by, the Portofino headland sank into the sea and other blue capes hove into sight."

There is only one great fault to find with Italy as an art and tourist country: it is far too rich in cultural relics and art treasures for one to be able to pay due attention to them all. The Roman relics, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the Baroque and a very vital modern age in turn all claim one's interest and we at least on *Daphne* had already been in Italy four times before we really discovered that the old Etruscans had given this land both what is perhaps its most fascinating art and a trait which still lives on more or less clearly in the whole of its subsequent development. It was natural, therefore, that in the early part of this summer we devoted most of our interest to these forgotten cousins of the Greeks we were on our way to visit.

The Etruscans were regarded even in ancient times as an enigmatic people, and this mystery has increased in modern times in that the key to their language, still spoken by innumerable educated Romans in Caesar's time, has been lost. Our modern archeologists have solved the riddles of the hieroglyphics and cuneiforms, but the Etruscan inscriptions, written down with clear Greek letters, still defy the most astute attempts at interpretation. This mystery, in conjunction with the paucity of any historic source, has made the Etruscans a rewarding object for the myths of cultural history. Ah, imaginatively stimulating ciphers to the Etruscans' supposed Secret, with what delight I too have swung in your beguiling toils! The first to arouse my interest in the Etruscans was Aldous Huxley. I read fascinated his description of the smile on the faces of the sarcophagus figures, the reflected glow of an insight into the riddle of life that has gone down into the grave with the dead and now lives on only in the facial expression of the statues. My secret ideal during my first years as a student was, like Huxley's heroes, to kiss lovely women in museum rooms beneath the cynically wise statue of Apollo Vei. But after intellectualism came vitalism, for me personally as well as for the literary fashion.

D. H. Lawrence's spirited transformation of the Etruscans to a race redeemed by sex, to the personification of his dreams that the primitive, the holy and the sexual were one, seemed to me suddenly as Truth Revealed. Life in its fullness, untainted by the fall of the intellect, had existed in Etruria until the sober and efficient Romans put an end to the Golden Age, in the same way as the Europeans two thousand years later broke off the paradisiac life in the South Sea Islands. This romantic conception was not replaced by a more realistic one until, in the archeological museum in Florence, I met the Etruscans themselves, that is, their art, and discovered that first and foremost they are representatives of the general Mediterranean culture on which the classic Greek state and way of life were built up. Etruria is very largely a place of survivals, where the lucumon families, right up to the time of the Roman emperors, preserved the traditions from the merchant city-states, governed by the nobility, which in Greece were ousted by more modern forms of society. What are these monumental tombs, this death cult, which have supplied us with both Etruscan and imported Greek art, if not a local and carefully preserved variant of the generally flourishing aristocratic family religion, the worship of dead ancestors? The burial mounds of Vulci and Cerveteri are nothing other than late descendants of Mycenae's cupola graves, and the race horses, the wrestlers, the dancers and the banquets we see portrayed on the walls in the tufa tombs of Chiusi, Orvieto and Tarquinia already surrounded the funerals of the Iliad. There is nothing to indicate that the Etruscans were wiser, more sensuous or more deeply initiated in mystic cults than other old Mediterranean races. Nor do the fascinating legends, already nurtured by Herodotus and other ancient writers, of their dark origin and migration across the sea or down the slopes of the Alps, stand up to objective research. Where do nations actually come from? The majority grow out of a blending of races and an inner evolution on the earth that bears them, and the question of the Etruscans' origin

is no doubt very little different from the problem of where the French, for example, have come from. All one can say for certain is that the Etruscans, from the end of the so-called Villanova era—i.e., from about 700 B.C.—were the great pillars of culture in Italy, with an empire which at times extended from the Alps in the north to the Greek colonies in the Gulf of Naples in the south.

But even if the Etruscans cannot be regarded as the exceptional, enigmatic people, the race descended from the unknown and then exterminated without a trace, that they are sometimes made out to be, they have nevertheless an undeniable personality which cannot be confused with any other; a fundamental trait—hard to define but easy to feel—which goes through all their art. It is best described as something rugged and earth-bound, but at the same time something cosmic and pompous, an anti-heroic and fateful rusticity, which distinguishes them not only from the supple and intellectual Greeks but also from the coldness and empire-building ambition of the Romans. One has a strange feeling in Italy that the Roman era and its military spirit was a kind of temporary parenthesis in the country's history, for during the Middle Ages the Etruscan spirit again gets the upper hand and the old trading city-states, so productive of art, rise again, almost ghostlike, on Etruria's earth. In the Florence Museum there is an Etruscan urn that foreshadows in the most astonishing way the architecture of the early Renaissance palaces, and artists such as Donatello and Michelangelo, Piero della Francesca and Signorelli can, to a great extent, be called late Etruscans. In modern Italy, too, the Etruscan spirit is still alive and far stronger than the heroic Roman heritage, as Mussolini found out to his cost. This does not imply spiritual featherweight. Too often the Italians are associated with macaroni, "O Sole Mio" and lovable gaiety; in actual fact they have weight, pith and pungency, as shown by the Italian art of today as well as yesterday.

The Etruscan cities with their wooden houses and terra-cotta

temples have, generally speaking, been obliterated as completely as the snows of yesteryear. Instead, small well-fortified towns grew up during the Middle Ages on the hills, as a rule much smaller than the ancient cities and up to the present day fortunately forgotten by time. Volterra today has nothing other than the city gate and part of the fortress walls left from ancient times, but round about—or rather on the side of the city that has not yet been swallowed up by erosion—the tombs lie so close together that there is hardly a field where the oxen have not at some time during plowing put their feet down unexpectedly into an underground room. The farmers in Volterra are practical folk, who are unwilling to lose ten square yards of arable land for a bagatelle like that. After cinerary urns, pieces of sculpture and vases—all things with a marketable value—have been picked out on the quiet, the tomb is filled up again and the field looks the same as before. There are, therefore, only filled-in or still undiscovered tombs around Volterra, and whoever wants to meet the city's old inhabitants must go along to the museum, where the official finds have come to rest.

Volterra's museum is in an old private palace and is generally regarded as uninteresting to anyone except archeologists. It contains practically nothing else but cinerary urns of alabaster or stone, 635 apparently similar chests, a yard wide, with a recumbent figure on the lid. For the very reason that it was so uniform the museum was one of our most interesting artistic experiences of the summer. The fact that the motif is the same once and for all enabled us, like the Etruscan sculptors, to concentrate on what in modern art is called style media and composition. These recumbent dead who, supported on their elbows, are gazing wide-eyed into eternity, pay no regard to the body's natural proportions: the head in most cases is as large as half the rest of the body, arms and legs have been shortened so that one extremity is sometimes twice as long as the other. Anatomy, the folds in the garments, necklaces, cushions, everything is a pretext for abstract constructions of a fascinating

profusion and strength. There are not two urns here alike, and if one or two with their schematic anatomy and their pattern of movement reminded us of Degas's sculpture, we found in others Henry Moore's hollowed-out shapes and flowing lines, while several extremists had formed their reclining figures of nothing but cubes, cones and pyramids merging one into the other, with outlines which from certain angles unite them in mutual curves, from others break them apart in a way that a Laurens or an Adam might envy. The front of the urns with mythological scenes in relief invite comparison in the same way with modern painting: there are both cubists, purists, surrealists and a tendency to abstraction which sometimes swamps the whole motif.

This art is specially interesting if one remembers that this anti-naturalism is not naïve, but that its creators were quite familiar with the artistic principles of Hellenism. The Volterra urns date from the third and second centuries B.C. and in relation to the older Tarquinia and Chiusi art show a conscious repudiation of realism in its Greek form. They foretold instead in a remarkable way the medieval conception of art. Nothing is in fact more naïve than the belief that an unrealistic art is due to technical inability to copy nature: two well-known figures on a sarcophagus in Volterra Museum, true to life to the point of caricature, show clearly how they could, but seldom would, sculpture in those days.

The coast south of Viareggio is low and monotonous, for the whole of this area is geologically part of the River Arno's delta. All that may be seen are sand and *pineta* and far away on the desolate beach the smoke from a fisherman's camp fire. After the friendly shores farther north this landscape has an almost forlorn air, and it is easier to understand the romantically macabre story of Shelley's death. It was on this treacherous coast that the English poet was drowned while out fishing and it was here that Byron

burned his heart on a fire of pine twigs and cones. Perhaps our gloomy impression was partly due to the nauseating swell and the meager wind.

Livorno's lighthouse flared up in the east and one fishing boat after the other lighted its magic lamp in the warm darkness. Soon these brightly shining flames formed a continuous rope of pearls in toward the coast, a band which we knew began up in the north near French waters, where this kind of fishing is forbidden, and continued down past Naples to Sicily and even farther—a barrier of light which for God the Father up above outlined the whole of the Italian boot, with all its capes and gulfs, like an illuminated advertisement in the darkness. Still, warm, starlit night out at sea!—your elementary peace and cosmic homeliness brought back the whole of the previous summer, all our nights at sea off Sardinia and the Spanish coast. We furled our sails, which were wet with dew, hung out a small riding light and fell asleep in our bunks as sweetly as one can only at Nature's great motherly breast.

The sea was still like glass when we awoke in the morning, but the sky had clouded over and there was sirocco in the air. The day was devoted to household duties: Mona sewed away at a *création* for our call at Capri and I settled down to Professor Pallottino's archeological work *Etruscologia*. About two o'clock we caught sight of the island of Capraia through the haze and at long last Elba's three humps appeared over the horizon.

Suddenly, at dusk, the wind improved. We made good headway, but it was overcast and chilly. The unexpectedly favorable wind made us change our plans to put in for the night at Porto Longone on Elba. Instead we plowed at full speed through the Straits of Elba, so close to the mainland that we could clearly see the conical mounds of slag from blast furnaces, long since extinct, of ancient Populonia and the circular burial mounds of the Etruscan necropolis. For us, with our newly awakened Etruscan interest, it was particularly inspiring to pass through these straits, once the life



nerve of Etruscan civilization. It was Elba and its iron mines, of untold worth in ancient times, which gave the cities on the mainland their wealth and assured them of the raw material for their export of refined metal products over a large part of the then known world. The Etruscans, unlike the Romans, were not cautious landlubbers and Spartan farmers, but bold, widely traveled seamen who, in keen rivalry with the Greeks and Carthaginians, wrested to themselves the mastery of the seas, in all that part of the Mediterranean which to this day is called the Tyrrhenian Sea—from the Greeks' name for the Etruscans: Tyrrhenians. The magic eyes which the Etruscans painted on the bows of their ships so that these could find the way more easily, saw both Athens and the misty coasts of remote Atlantic islands plundered by daring ships' crews—to say nothing of the Etruscan pirates' attempts to kidnap the wine god himself, as related in the "Homeric" *Hymn to Dionysus*.

We called at the war-ravaged Civitavecchia in order to leave *Daphne* in an absolutely safe harbor while we visited Etruscan cities along the coast, but although this port was an undeniable protection against the caprices of the sea, it appeared to offer other and perhaps worse dangers. It was with the greatest suspicion that we regarded the rascally types that instantly darted forward to help us moor, and the hordes of wild children who were playing among the ruins. One shady-looking seaman was particularly pushing; he showed us his signing-on book and wanted us to take him on as crew. His name was Depinta and he had at his disposal an old rowboat in which we allowed him to take the *Lambretta* ashore. The Neapolitan owner of an unpretentious boat-building yard, housed in a ruin, offered to let us use the workshop as a garage and even pressed the doorkey on us in case we should be late getting home at night. Was the whole thing a cleverly laid plot? Not until we had been talking to the Neapolitan and a whole host of others for some time did we begin to understand that we were dealing with thoroughly

decent people. The ruins were, in fact, a little village community, where everybody knew everybody and the romantic film-set exterior concealed the most respectable reality. We therefore felt quite easy about engaging Depinta to keep an eye on the boat, for—as he explained—“there’s such a lot of riffraff out in the big harbor.” He himself had a nailed-up cellar as a home for his family and had all the man of property’s respect for the right of possession.

Civitavecchia, ugliest of cities, I cannot deny that I set foot in your streets with feelings of pilgrim piety and amused curiosity. However much you may have changed in 120 years, you are and always will be the place where the most impossible but most famous, the most intelligent but most naïve, the vainest but fattest of France’s consuls bemoaned his harsh fate. But has Civitavecchia really changed so much since Stendhal wrote his impatient letters and immortal diaries here? The girls on the Corso are just as pretty as they were when the bored consul dreamed of marrying one of them, and the buildings fit his description quite well: “One of the few Italian cities which has achieved the difficult feat of being dreary in spite of the Mediterranean; a collection of desolate streets under a blazing sun and heavy, ugly houses, which all look like barracks for the carabinieri.” What could a man of the world do with himself in such a hole, cut off from the tantalizingly adjacent Rome? Stendhal, who all his life had thought only of the living and the present, began to divert himself during his years as consul by digging up vases from the newly discovered tombs at Tarquinia and Cerveteri. He declares in an expert way in one of his letters that these “Etruscan” vases are “older than Homer” and “over three thousand years old”—in actual fact the vases were imported from Greece in the 6th and 5th centuries. He tells too of the fantastic tombs where the foot-high figures on the frescoes with their bright colors gleam in the light of the plunderer’s torch as he forces his way down to where the dead lie stretched out on beds

of stone. "But after a week or two the paintings fade and the bodies crumble to dust under the influence of the fresh air."

The very first afternoon we went for a ride along the old Via Aurelia through a golden landscape, with ripe corn in the fields and small Etruscan cities dotted about on the heights. Our goal was Cerveteri, about twelve miles to the south. It is a typical Roman *campagna* town with a huddle of dilapidated houses clinging around the citadel, where the Rufolo princes, as in the days of Colonna and Orsini, still live as owners of the entire surroundings. On this hill the Etruscans' Caerae, now vanished without a trace, once lay with all its wooden houses and wooden temples. But on another hill, on the other side of a deep ravine, lies Caerae's necropolis, the city of the dead, over which time has only thrown a veil, so that what were once tall monuments, walls and passages are now soft mounds, disturbed here and there by the archeologist's spade, which has bared the sunken stone colossi and uncovered the entrances to the burial chambers. All afternoon we wandered about among cypresses, tombs and these conical stones, in which Lawrence saw phalli but which are really more like the small obelisks, emblems of sun worship, which the Egyptians placed on guard by their dead. The crickets were chirping for the sheer joy of life, the wind swayed the early-summer grass on the tombs and across the bounteous cornfields that extend right down to the sea huge cloud shadows were sailing, as light and fleeting as the centuries which have left this landscape unchanged for thousands of years.

Time has dealt all the more harshly with the dead and their dwellings. I must admit that during our walk with the unavoidable guide around the part containing the excavated tombs, restored and lit by electric light, we grew increasingly thoughtful as we glanced at the unexcavated mounds. The Etruscans have been unlucky with their tombs. First they were plundered to a great extent of Greek vases by Roman collectors, then for more than a

thousand years a hunt went on for jewels, gold and other metals and to round it all off came the most thorough plunderer of all: the archeologist. Stendhal and the other amateur archeologists at the beginning of the 19th century complained bitterly that none of the tombs they found was really untouched and as the Etruscans had left it. When the so-called Regolini-Galassi tomb was discovered in 1836, therefore, it was a great event: here lay the dead still adorned in their jewels and all the bronze utensils were untouched. But alas, we too visited this famous tomb, which lies quite apart from the other excavated tombs of Cerveteri, but it was just as empty as the others. There was not so much as a broken pitcher left in these rooms, deserted and empty as a flat whose furniture has been taken in distraint. The furniture had been removed to Rome and was on view in the Gregorian Museum of the Vatican daily between 10 A.M. and 5 P.M.

We concluded our visit to Cerveteri in the town of the living at a little wine shop, outside which young men were playing *boccia* and a white wine was served, as refreshing and excellent as only the poor hill towns around the Eternal City, the shadowy *castelli romani*, can offer. *Daphne* and her good-natured but hopelessly villainous-looking guard gave us a warm welcome in the evening darkness; Depinta had taken it on himself to wash the entire boat with fresh water and offered to paint the fore-saloon's ceiling if we stayed for another day.

It may not seem a very stimulating start to a day to drink one's morning coffee surrounded by twisted bits of wreckage, hulls flaming with rust and green with seaweed and palace ruins stained by several winters' rain and hung with poor people's infinitely human washing. But if all this is reflected and enhanced in the morning calm and the morning sun as it was in the forgotten *darsena* of Civitavecchia, it is, despite everything, an experience of great and sheer beauty. It is a curious fact that modern art, during the years before the great world catastrophe, created a surrealistic poetry of

ruin and a beauty of the absurd which makes such a *milieu* bearable, hateful as it was to an earlier generation. We were just sitting talking of all this—of Salvador Dali's wrecks and de Chirico's dead façades, of a floral dress floating like an ethereal fiancée by Chagall on a clothesline among the ruins and of a newly built meteorological observation hut painted in black and white checks à la Mondrian—when suddenly, like an incarnation of our discussion on art, Roberto appeared on shore. He just stood there with a suitcase in his hand and a sunny smile all over his face. "*Ciao*, Göran! I'm signing on for two weeks." There was general rejoicing and an extra cup of strong *espresso* coffee for Roberto, who had been sitting up all night on the train. He was, however, just as eager as we were to make the acquaintance of the Etruscans in Tarquinia and after only half an hour we left *Daphne* in Depinta's care. Unfortunately there was not room for all three of us on the Lambretta; Roberto got on to a bus but was promised a lift home instead.

Perhaps the most striking thing about the Etruscan cities is that, from the point of view of art, each has an individuality which strikes one in a different way. Volterra, Cerveteri and Tarquinia are no less distinctive than the medieval Pisa, Siena and Florence. The pride of Tarquinia is the painted tombs, which are more numerous than in any other city. A visit to these tombs, which are spread out over a relatively large area outside the medieval city, is, scenically as well, one of the most moving experiences Italy has to offer. You make your way along winding paths, through head-high, waving corn, to small stone huts which look like tool sheds used by the farmers, and then you go down deep, narrow stairs into square rooms with niches, stone beds and alcoves. Not until the eyes have grown used to the lantern light do figures painted in rather faded but infinitely pure colors appear on the walls, scenes filled with an almost inconceivable vitality, a dazzling divinization of the joy of life, and in contrast to them the unmoving, reclining sculptures of the dead, with wide-open eyes and the mystic tablet

in their hands. After seeing the tombs in Tarquinia in this way one begins to reflect on the difference between this Etruscan worship of the dead and the Egyptian death cult. While in Egypt death invades life and the sterile pyramids grow up out of the barren desert earth like overshadowing apotheoses of eternity and death, the invasion in Etruria is quite the reverse: life grows down into the earth; all the seething life force of the corn, all the juice of ripening grapes and all the joy of human life is stored down here in vast reserves. The Etruscans fulfilled what was Rilke's dream, their tombs are his *Weltinnenraum*, the oneness of death and life that he sought. It is an almost ironic circumstance that Rilke, who traveled so much and must have passed Tarquinia in the train several times on his way to Rome, never really discovered the Etruscans. He would not have wearied of this day-long walk outside the little town, he would have rejoiced as wholeheartedly as we did in the warm rays of the summer sun and this earthly landscape with its harvesters, flocks of sheep and aqueducts making their way toward Rome. But he would have known even greater joy in going down to visit the cool, dark abodes of the dead, so numerous and scattered in this part that they would seem to be everywhere: under every field and every village in the world, in every place where generations have gone down into the grave with their saved-up experience of life's wonders.

Tarquinia's museum, housed in a medieval palace, is also worth a visit. It contains mostly tombstone sculptures, huge reclining figures carved out of black lava, limestone or marble. Roberto filled page after page of his sketchbook and was enraptured. As a painter he is very modern with a leaning to the abstract, but does think that an Italian artist has more to learn from the Etruscans than from the Negroes, the Incas or other primitive masters. They may all have a feeling for design, an underlying sense of destiny and power, but the Etruscans have, in addition, a human and individual trait which is often just as strong as it is in Romanesque art.

## FROM CIRCE'S ISLE TO SCYLLA AND CHARYBDIS

IT IS EASY to put up with rain when there is every reason to believe that it is the summer's last, prior to three months' unbroken sunshine. And it is no martyrdom to toil next day at overhauling the engine and rigging or to drag heavy necessities along endless, grimy quays in the dreariest of ports, when through the narrow opening in the mole you catch a glimpse of a deep-blue sea where you know that you will soon disappear beneath white sails. You go about like a millionaire in disguise, outwardly one of the gray drudges fettered to these quays, but inwardly charged with a hidden reserve of happiness. It is a situation akin to the favorite and ever-recurring theme of the fairy tale: lowliness as a disguise. What are Odysseus on his return home, Haroun al Raschid roaming at night through Baghdad or the princes of the Nordic fairy tales in their swineherds' guise, but the predecessors of modern mythology's film stars traveling incognito or the managing director's daughter taking a job as an ordinary secretary. To be spared taking life seriously, to have a secret back door to another world, is obviously the great escapist dream common to all. For us, too, the cheerless drudgery in Civita-vecchia's harbor became a game: our kingdom, the sea, was waiting for us.

Late in the afternoon we were ready to cast off after saying good-by fondly to Depinta, the Neapolitan boat builder and the others. There was little wind and the sea was *leggermente mosso*, i.e., rather choppy after the night's sirocco, so it took us three hours to reach the point, where Santa Marinella's elegant beach with its

stone pines and villas was studied with interest through the glasses, but then our course and speed improved. Roberto, who had obviously been a trifle seasick, brightened up and began to sing Brazilian Negro songs, the bow wave foamed and in the evening sunlight the coast was like a farewell to all our Etruscan experiences, with undulating gold where the corn was being harvested, with small towns on the slopes and in the background the extinct volcanic hills from which the burial chambers' tufa had once come. At dusk we sailed through whole swarms of lantern-fishing boats on their way out to the night's haul, their lanterns, unlit as yet, hanging out over the stern like huge harebells on bent stalks. Evidently the night winds blow readily from the low-lying Roman campagna, for a gentle land breeze took the place of the sea breeze the minute the sun went down, and all night long we ran with the wind in the mainsail, the spanker and the balloon jib along the dark lane between the sparse points of light on the coast and the gleaming row of lantern-fishers farther out. We took it in turns of two hours' watch each, and as we were three we all got enough sleep, especially as there was only a slight sea. We just floated along under the stars, with the lights of Rome phosphorescing beyond the Tiber Delta. It was the skipper's watch when dawn came, just as we were passing Fiumicino, and the stars went out as swiftly as the fishing-lanterns out at sea. There was only one brightly shining morning star left above the horizon, like a pious lantern-fisherman whom our Lord had raised up to Himself, a fisherman who need never again go out in his open boat onto the perilous sea on dark nights but could, instead, fish for souls up in the heavens with the other spear-  
ing stars.

Roberto is a darling of Fortune, one of those people around whose sunny smile the whole world falls into harmonic circles. In the center of this world sits, or more often lies, Roberto; fat and genial as an old Etruscan, intelligent and entertaining, whether he is talking about his favorite topic, art, about Brazil, which he ab-



sorbed with every pore during a year's stay, or only making a harmless jest. The very weather this time seemed to fall in with Roberto's good mood: the night breeze was punctually replaced by the nicest imaginable day breeze, the sea was flat with no impeding waves, the shade under the awning was restful and visibility was as clear as crystal, with the level country of the campagna in the foreground and, farther away, mountains that grew more and more Neapolitan and jaunty as the day wore on. We caught a fat mackerel just in time for lunch and we had chilled white wine in the refrigerator. What more could you want! *Daphne* steered herself without anyone at the tiller, and as we ate a gay lunch we passed Anzio, where we tried in vain to make out through the glasses any traces of the fierce fighting during the war. The only ruins we saw were two thousand years old and served to confirm the fact that reconstruction here, as everywhere in Italy, had made surprisingly rapid strides. In the afternoon Capo Circeo rose out of the sea, Circe's Isle, which is no longer an island but has been joined to the Pontine Marshes by alluvion from the River Sisto. Its rocky, sugar-loaf silhouette rises out of the sea, however, just as isolated and decorative as three thousand years ago and the woods on its slopes still give shade to a fully authentic Circe's Cave—even if modern tourists, unlike Odysseus' sailors, run no risk of being changed into swine—donkeys at the very most—during their visit there. With this first Homeric greeting from the world that was our goal, it was natural for the skipper to fish the Odyssey out of *Daphne's* well-stocked library—a book which, to his unspeakable shame, he now began reading for the first time.

At sunset we again met the lantern-fishers and this evening there was no night wind, presumably because high cliffs come right down to the sea here. We drifted about all night east of Capo Circeo among the lantern-fishers, whose nets and maneuvers forced us to keep watch on deck despite the dead calm. The sunrise brought no wind either, and we had to lie waiting in the blazing sun until ten

o'clock. At last a breeze sprang up. We tacked in to Gaeta first, but then veered out toward the island of Ventotene. The sun-breeze always follows the sun round clockwise and so, later in the day, we could hold a close-hauled and gradually improving course along the coast, until according to the compass we had Ischia dead ahead. The haze was so thick, however, that we saw neither Ischia, Capri, Vesuvius nor Naples, and not until the beacons flared up in the velvet dusk were we certain of our direction. In an hour we came in on our engine to Ischia's little circular crater lake, which, with its narrow entrance, is one of the best harbors in the Mediterranean for small boats. The entire village seemed extinct, and when we tied up at the deserted quay the only one to greet us was an enterprising bare-footed boy who sold us a large *pizza*, a kind of pasty peculiar to Campania. Washed down with our last Etruscan wine it made an excellent dinner before we turned in, quite tired after our 120-mile run from Civitavecchia. If Ischia was sleepy in the evening it was all the more lively in the morning. By six o'clock we were awakened by shouts, singing, the braying of donkeys, the spluttering of engines and the whistles from the innumerable excursion steamers—tangible signs, in case we had forgotten, that we had reached the province of Naples.

While Capri stands on guard off the southern point of the Gulf of Naples, Ischia has the same position in the north. They are two islands with much the same history and character. Latterly, Ischia has assumed part of Capri's attraction for tourists: the more fastidious Italian public, especially, has tired of Capri's increasing vulgarization and "discovered" Ischia instead. Nowadays it is very much more aristocratic and *comme il faut* to own a villa in the *pineta* at Porta Ischia than a house clinging like a swallow's nest to Capri's sugar-loaf mountain—even if the island of Tiberius and Axel Munthe is still a keen rival. The boat owner, fortunately, is not faced with such tricky and vital alternatives, but can be sure

of choosing rightly by choosing both.

Early in the morning we took a bus in among the vineyards that cover Ischia like a green carpet from the shore right up to the highest peaks. Through the windows we caught glimpses of fishing villages with small, inviting harbors and mountain villages with churches in Sicilian-Arabian style. We suddenly decided to get off in the village right at the top, with a view over half the island. As luck would have it, we soon made the valuable acquaintance of the village storekeeper. In half an hour Roberto painted the worthy man's portrait with Ripolin paint in four colors and by way of thanks he asked us to an opulent breakfast in his home. When Roberto, exhilarated by the unusually good wine, signed his masterpiece for safety's sake "Leonardo da Vinci," we were given an extra little present to take with us, a 10-liter cask of wine—"though I know well enough that Leonardo's dead," as our host discreetly whispered to me. "But don't tell anyone," I advised the old man, "someone else might get taken in." He nodded in the way of those who need no advice: he had thought of that himself.

Ischia is of volcanic origin and has thermal springs, known even in ancient times. The steaming water, which contains radium, is drawn straight out of the earth into marble baths and, according to the advertisements, is good for almost everything from ingrowing toenails to thinning hair. We therefore had a wonderful bath with every confidence, to be clean if nothing else after our bus ride, and then strolled, as philosophic and at ease as well-bathed old Romans, through the *pineta* to Ischia's citadel a few miles from the harbor.

Here we had need of all the philosophic calm we could muster. The very outside should have warned us: not even Doré has designed anything more improbable, more spiky and more vertiginous than this monstrosity. However, we made our way unsuspectingly up endless steps and along dark passages until we ran into the caretaker on a terrace in front of the actual castle. He was a cripple of

about thirty-five, a weird cross between a Victor Hugo hunchback and one of Dostoevski's potential saints. He was surrounded by a horde of small boys from the village below; when we appeared they were sitting reverently around him in a ring with the Gulf of Naples in all its overwhelming beauty lying spread out below. He stopped speaking the second he saw us and we never knew with what he was entertaining his listeners. He received us rather haughtily, but did give us a guide who was to show us the sights. This was a boy of about twelve who knew his way blindfolded through all the rooms and passages and who warned us the whole time of holes gaping in the ground or floors that gave way under foot. The citadel has obviously been uninhabited for many years and will soon be a ruin. The chief attraction turned out to be the burial cellar of the now abandoned convent, where the dead nuns, after their life behind the convent walls, have been placed each on a kind of stone throne with a hole in the seat, so that the rotting flesh could run down into a bowl under the throne. The skeleton with the parched skin remained, and our small guide proudly handed us each a loose arm to feel and look at. The other sights were the prison, where the rulers of Naples as late as the 19th century mewed up political prisoners who had worked for the uniting of Italy, and the place of execution, which was expertly demonstrated by the little lad. As a somewhat irrelevant addition we were shown in a church some dilapidated frescoes from the end of the 14th century. The whole entertainment cost 100 lire, which we paid to the caretaker. He was just finishing his academy out on the terrace and graciously asked us our nationality. Our answer resulted in an astoundingly correct analysis of the labor movement and social policy of Sweden and Finland. He also asked us to send him stamps for his large collection when we got home. But it was getting dark. Six lean and undernourished boys carried him into his room in the crumbling tower and we strolled home in a much more serious frame of mind than when we came.

Early next morning *Daphne* headed out of Ischia's volcanic harbor in a light breeze. Mona was at the tiller, I busied myself with sails and ropes, but Roberto, like a good passenger, went to sleep, until he was awakened two hours later by the violent pitching of the boat and the pounding of waves on the deck. A squall had swept over us off Procida and the leaden sky threatened rain. Was this the celebrated Gulf of Naples? We saw nothing of the coast, only a menacing sea, and we had already half a mind to turn back when the sky cleared as though by magic. By eleven o'clock we were on the starboard tack right out in the gulf surrounded by all the ingredients of a travel brochure: an indolent sea, the festive cone of Vesuvius, the houses of Naples terraced like an amphitheater and dazzling white at a distance and, dead ahead, the double hump of Capri silhouetted against the light. Proof that everything below a fair surface is not so pleasant was promptly given by a large shark, which Roberto was the first to see as it lazed in the sun with fin aloft.

Capri is not a volcanic island like Ischia, but a limestone rock chiseled out of the sea. That is why it is so different from its more northerly sister and remains unsurpassed despite everything, unique and so fantastic that even the most critical must yield. We had thought of sailing straight to the harbor at Marina Grande, but as we approached these gleaming white cliffs with fanciful villas perched among the precipices, we were seized with such enthusiasm that we decided on the spot to sail around the scene before running into port. All the well-known places glided past one by one: the village of Capri on the island's back, between the two humps, Anacapri with Munthe's San Michele, all the grottoes from the famous blue one to the green and the white, Torre Materita, Krupp's villa, almost as notorious for its orgies as Tiberius' palace a little higher up, Quisisana's hotel terrace and the bathing beach at Piccola Marina—it was all still there just as I had known it in 1937, just as chemically free of seriousness, just as playfully conjured up by the Creator

in a frivolous moment. My first visit to Capri lasted only five days, but in the grim winter of 1940 it happened that I chose these very memories and this island as a holiday place for my imagination and an inner haven from the reality of the front line, as I have described in my first book, the little novel *The Ideal Game*. During those months of war I had lived so intensely on Capri, I had so physically summoned up its paths, its hot sun and sea air during dark nights in the snow, that I now saw the island again with the feelings usually aroused by the scene of one's first love: not without an ironic smile, but also secretly moved.

Off Piccola Marina I clambered into the dinghy, which was then cast off on a seventy-yard-long rope. I was ostensibly to photograph *Daphne* running before the wind with all sails spread toward the sugar-loaf isles of the Faraglions, but the real reason was a purely psychic need of experiencing from without the meeting between *Daphne* and Capri, of really seeing it. A threat of mutiny, however, soon forced me back on board. Mona was blind to the delight of passing the narrow opening between the cliffs of Capri and the Faraglions, but with the skipper at the tiller *Daphne*, despite her protests and warnings, flitted in like a butterfly through the gates of hell. On the other side of the six-hundred-foot high Salto di Tiberio, from which the emperor cast down his victims according to legend, we ran into a stiff breeze, and the cruise was unexpectedly wet. All day long we had pictured how we would run elegantly into Capri's harbor in full view of the admiring crowd of millionaires, ex-royalties and mere mortals on the terraces of the villas and restaurants. Roberto, who has a fine sense of elegance, had decked himself out in good time in a sailor's sweater with *Daphne's* name embroidered on the front, Mona had put on a light-blue overall and the skipper had been made to shave. But alas, we were already sadly wet from the driving wind when we reached the arm of the pier, and once inside the harbor treacherous gusts and sudden calms, together with our nervousness, made us commit, within ten min-

utes, practically every wrong maneuver possible in such a situation; the least of which would still, years afterward, have made yacht-club sailors blush with shame. Mona dropped the foresail in the water as she was about to furl it, the skipper swore like a trooper, but got tangled up himself, in the most absurd way, in the enormous coir rope that was to be thrown ashore, and if we had not managed to get the anchor down we should have drifted in among the cluster of fishing boats. The only one who kept calm was Roberto: he stood leaning comfortably against the mast looking on with an angelic smile—in full accord with given orders, as experience had shown that Roberto's participation in a maneuver only made it more difficult. At last, after a lot of trouble and humiliating help from several fishermen who hurried to the scene, we lay moored with our stern to the quay and Capri's harbor master, *il maresciallo del porto*, could approach in his resplendent uniform. The first thing he did was to bellow at Roberto:

"Oaf! Scoundrel!"

It was some time before we realized that the blue sweater with the name of the boat had given him to think that Roberto was an Italian deckhand employed on the foreign multimillionaire's boat.

The thing is to be different on Capri, and even those who abhor standing out from the crowd should do so here, where discrepancy is conformity. Capri is a refuge of everything artificial which cannot flourish in normal communities with a population whose working and family life is an indictment of the lotus-eaters' quest for pleasure. Here there are only ne'er-do-wells, tourists, holiday-makers and those who live on them. The whole of Capri is a huge passenger ship making luxury cruises outside the three-mile limit of everyday life.

There is always something magic about stepping abruptly from the sea and darkness into the middle of the glittering night

life of a foreign city, about landing suddenly in a little dinghy in front of a teeming café—rather as though one owned the flying carpet and were a prince from the Arabian Nights. After fashionable Capri, Amalfi—once Venice's rival as mistress of the seas, but nowadays forgotten even by the tourists—made a very pleasant, unspoiled and homely impression. We walked for a long time about the winding streets around the great, mysterious marble cathedral.

It was still dead calm when we awoke in the morning sun beneath the high *campanile*, and the harbor master, or rather the overseer of the fishing boats drawn up on the beach, had no difficulty in convincing us that Amalfi's open roadstead is the safest harbor imaginable. Following his instructions, we moored *Daphne* with double anchor right inside in the angle of the little jetty and eagerly lifted the Lambretta ashore. It was very much nicer using Amalfi as a base for our planned motorcycle expedition to the temple district of Paestum than the large, grimy harbor in Salerno. The only fly in our ointment was that Roberto was now leaving us—the next run was far too long and venturesome for his anything but sailor-like nature. At the moment of parting he drew a fine work of art in our guest book: *Daphne's* owners in the guise of an Etruscan sarcophagus couple. We were to see Paestum together, in any case. Roberto got on a bus, while Mona and I rode the motorcycle to Salerno along the winding, but extremely beautiful coast road, partly cut out of the cliff. After that we had a flat *autostrada* all the way to Paestum, where Roberto found us about an hour later in the shadow of Poseidon's temple.

Paestum is Greece in all its archaic purity and strength. Greece itself has nothing more and nothing greater to offer, as these temples, built in what was called Great Greece, *Graecia Magna*, are already on an absolute level where there can be no further question of uglier or more beautiful, only of different manifestations of the same indivisible greatness. From here on we were in Greece, we had arrived at our goal and had only to assimilate its different as-



pects with all our senses. For me personally, moreover, our visit to Paestum enabled me to relive my first meeting with the spirit of Greece on a sunny spring day long ago, when, together with a friend, I felt the divine presence in these same stones. Half jokingly that time we had sworn sacred vows about everything we would and would not do in our lives in order to be true Greeks; one of the things, I remember, was that we would never read newspapers or have anything stronger than wine to drink. I fear that we have kept the more serious promises just as badly as these, for life is long and art short. Not until art ceases to be art and the experiencing of art becomes something more than a fleeting aesthetic mood can it mean anything in our lives. Paestum revisited was a reminder that classic art makes other and higher demands on us than modern.

In the evening we went with Roberto to a northbound train. Through the carriage window we saw him immediately begin talking to his fellow-passengers, obviously starting to tell a very amused audience about his adventures at sea. His warm and happy smile no longer shone for us, it vanished from our horizon on Paestum's god-forsaken station. A trifle sad at heart we drove through the darkness to Salerno, where we landed right in the middle of a big religious festival, with the entire population out in the brightly lighted streets and a magnificent procession in honor of the Sacred Heart. We too got caught up in the general excitement and stopped to have a delicious dinner washed down with a lot of wine at a stall in the thick of the market throng before plunging once more into the dark night. But after only a few miles we came to a village where just as gorgeous a saint's festival was in full swing, and a little later to yet another. We were hardly surprised, therefore, to find Amalfi even more festive and teeming with people than any of the other places. It was all in honor of the apostle Andrew, who has been the town's patron saint ever since daring Amalfi mariners in the 13th century brought home his earthly remains as booty from Greece—a parallel to the exploit by which the Venetians made sure of St.

Mark's bones in Alexandria. But we were tired after a hundred miles on the motorcycle, and when we heard that the festival was to last for three days we turned in at once.

Next morning we rode the Lambretta to nearby Ravello—like Amalfi a place which for some reason is now off the beaten track but which, fifty years ago, was visited by every self-respecting tourist to Italy. Here our grandparents met the white-haired Wagner in the winding streets leading from the Sicilian-Norman cathedral to small squares with Moorish fountains. Here Rilke listened to the winter storms behind protecting panes in one of the 800-year-old palaces, converted into hotels, whose weathered marble façades and portals guarded by lions give Ravello an air of a mountain Venice. But what most impressed us in Ravello was the garden of the Palazzo Rufolo, the model for the enchanted garden in *Parsifal*. One can stray about for hours among Arabian palace ruins, plashing fountains, Gothic monastery passages, moldering pavilions, staircases, loggias and terraces, all covered in completely tropical vegetation, but wide open to the blue infinity of the Gulf of Salerno. The garden is the work of an Englishman, Francis Nevil Reid, who bought this conglomeration of ruins and terraced vineyards toward the end of the 19th century. Guided by the same historic-romantic passion which has given rise to more or less genuine settings all over the world, he created out of this raw material a whole which has no equivalent but many parallels. The Chinese pavilions of the 18th century, Washington Irving's "restoration" of Granada's Alhambra and Zorn's *Gammelgård* at Mora, are really three variations of this same theme, and if Axel Munthe had resort to a more heterogeneous material when he composed San Michele in stone, the principle was exactly the same: the particular environment as a work of art.

It is a truism that man's environment shapes his needs and that his needs in their turn affect the environment. To build in accordance with this principle, to build homes which correspond functionally to the habits of those who live in them or factories which give

practical form to working life, is architecture. To create an environment for purely fancied purposes, to suggest a life which is non-existent by building its shell, is an artistic game, based on the same principles as the work of the sculptor, the painter and the poet. Our modern age has rightly reacted against the tendency of the preceding generations to confuse these two ideas of architecture. We reject the strange hybrids between the romantic stage setting and the utility building, the railway stations that look like Viking halls and the blocks of flats that look like palaces. But does this justify our rejection of aesthetic architecture in general? Is there no *pure* artistic architecture, just as there is a pure utility architecture? Admittedly it seldom happens that a house or a garden fulfills a solely aesthetic purpose without at the same time being intended for practical use, but when, as in the Palazzo Rufolo, one does come across such an example of scenic art in enduring material, or the constructive space-formations of certain modern architectural sculptors—such as Schwitters's "Merz" buildings—one should acknowledge their purity and appreciate their enchanting possibilities. To portray people by outlining their environment, to hint at action by setting the scene and to describe feelings by displaying their object, is a costly, but to our modern way of thinking deeply significant, art form which could take for its motto: "Absent man" or "Dictatorship by things." Seen from this angle, a stroll in the garden of the Palazzo Rufolo is a walk through a poem. Here is the wall over which the young nobleman—but which?—can creep in, defying death; here is the window where the fair maiden—but when?—can listen to his vows of love; here is the seduction arbor with a view over the—weather permitting—moonlit sea. There is everything here, from the dark alley for the dagger thrust to the cloisters for eternal painful remembrance, and there on the seat outside the rose-covered saints' chapel an invisible white-bearded Capuchin monk is seated in prayer. You can find, too, the embrasure where you could think deep thoughts—if you had any—and the

guest room for the one you have always loved but so far never met. Lookout-tower and bourgeois coffee-veranda, antique statues and tennis court overgrown with thistles—there is no end to Palazzo Rufolo's metaphors, symbols and simple tales, all just as surrealistically absurd and full of gaping holes between man's illusions, nature's indifference and the dimly sensed presence of something greater and full of meaning.

Toward evening we returned to Amalfi, where the festivities were in full swing in the streets in spite of a violent thunderstorm. We too were late going to bed and during the night the wind started to blow straight into the harbor: it howled in the rigging, the halyards slapped against the mast, the sea rose and hour after hour we had to sit up in our pitching cabin ready to put out to sea if things got worse. Fortunately the wind veered to the north in the morning and we were sheltered by the shore, but we had hardly fallen asleep before the harbor master came and woke us: a giant fireworks display was to be let off during the day and night from the very angle of the pier where we lay and the festival organizers could take no responsibility . . . We saw with mixed feelings whole batteries of crackers, Catherine-wheels and rockets being dragged toward us. The first two crackers—which were then repeated every half-hour until evening to proclaim to the entire Cape Sorrento that Amalfi was having a festival—sent a shower of sparks both over *Daphne* and the stock of fireworks still waiting to be let off, and we quickly made off to a new anchorage below the cathedral.

Actually we had thought of starting this same morning, but there was a stiff breeze blowing out at sea and we felt timid after our sleepless night. The northerly wind did mean that we could run before it, but this next stage was one of the trickiest of the whole trip, as the coast all the way down to Sicily has almost no harbors and it means sailing 170 nautical miles nonstop without a port of

refuge within reach. It was a day of arguments and mopish depression. We tried in vain to silence the impelling voices within us by taking the motorcycle to Positano and taking part in the Amalfi festival, in honor of which we dressed *Daphne* over-all. The fun had gone out of everything, there was a veil between us and this far too idyllic, far too earthbound world. The trials and adventure ahead of us, the far-off coast beckoning beyond the waves completely magnetized our thoughts and we realized that we would have no peace of mind until we were on the way. We therefore decidedly irrevocably to leave that evening, and during the afternoon we had time to take the Lambretta on board, make ready for sea, and take part in the blessing of all the boats in the harbor which was the culmination of the carrying of Andrew's relics in stately procession from the cathedral down to the shore. Darkness soon fell over the gaily lighted town, which was swarming like an ant heap and humming with voices like a football stadium. The fireworks increased hour by hour, rockets shook the mountains like cannon shot and the angle of the pier did duty as a kind of giant fountain from which spluttering tongues of flame rose up to the night sky in arc after arc.

No one noticed us as we hoisted our sails in the darkness, weighed anchor and glided soundlessly out onto the black sea. It was still blowing just as strongly as in the daytime, but the moon, large and safe, had risen over the mountains and once we were out of the lee of the coast and found that *Daphne* was carrying her sail well, our recently quaking hearts were filled with freedom and assurance. Behind us the swiftly paling lights of Amalfi, from which soon only the bursting arcs of the rockets reached us above the horizon; all around us a white-capped sea which got rougher the farther out we got from the coast; and ahead of us the whole of our surging adventure. The die was cast, to return against this wind and this sea was unthinkable. All the better; with our sails stretched as tight as drums we skimmed along in the warm night with a glittering moon-

bridge for company and the spiky mountains of the coast like a phantom silhouette to port. Sleep was out of the question in this sea, and while the log spun around like a propeller in our wake, we sat hour after hour on deck, silent and fascinated, watching the beacons snuff out astern while new ones were lighted to the south.

In the morning we bitterly repented having hesitated so long about starting: the wind dropped and we had to give up all hope of a record trip down to the Straits of Messina. All we could do was gratefully accept any breezes that were kind enough to blow from the right direction, and above all try to rest, which was not so easy in the heavy swell. In eight hours we had covered sixty nautical miles, but we were now making only two or three knots. High coast mountains could be seen faintly to the east, the sun blazed down and the whole of the Mediterranean in its summer indolence lay empty and desolate all around. The afternoon weather report on the radio promised light variable winds and we again realized that the greatest virtue a Mediterranean sailor can have is patience. Luckily the swell had died down, we bathed from our rope ladder and then lay reading in the shade of the awning. I was studying modern Greek from a little phrase book and Mona had fished out Goethe's *Italienische Reise*, from which she read aloud the account of the poet's sailing trip from Sicily to Naples along the same coast we were following. Especially curious is the story of how the French frigate on which Goethe was traveling was nearly cast up by strong currents, in a dead calm, onto the wild coast of Capri, inhabited by wreckers; an episode lacking all nautical credibility for those who have themselves sailed down here. The explanation must be that Goethe "borrowed" some story or other from treacherous tidal coasts to season his description.

The second night at sea was as listless and uneventful as the first had been exciting. There was enough wind blowing, however, to make us conscience-stricken about turning in both together, and we kept three-hour watches. We evidently had a following current,

as the log showed too little when we sighted Capo di Bonifati's lighthouse on the beam at midnight. Dead calm and a queasy ground swell in the morning; the skipper felt seasick, so we used the engine for an hour until the sun-breeze got up. Then we sailed all day with light winds so far out from the coast that it was only a blur in the haze of the sun. In the afternoon Stromboli's characteristic cone loomed nearer, until we could clearly see the terraces of the vineyards on the side of the volcano. The skipper, proud of his newly acquired knowledge, held school on board for the crew, who dutifully learned to count in Greek from one to a hundred. At sunset we reached Capo Vaticano, where poor medieval villages and old castle ruins stood out against the sun-baked mountain slopes. The night was just as disappointing when it came to sailing as the previous one, the unruffled sea glistening in the moonlight; but soon after midnight there was a curious wind phenomenon. I was sitting dozing at the tiller, when all at once in the calm, starry night a single, pitch-black cloud approached swiftly from the south. Beneath it was a violent but equally isolated wind squall, and after darkening the moon for ten minutes and tossing us about it vanished toward the north, a warning and a reminder that we were now nearing one of the freak spots of nature: the Straits of Messina between the mainland and Sicily. Two vast belts of sea and air are joined here by a narrow slit in the rock which produces wind and current conditions of a unique kind. The Straits of Messina are, among other things, one of the few places in the Mediterranean where the tide has a noticeable effect.

For seafarers in ancient times who could not force their way against wind and current with the help of engines, this important passage was always a very perilous factor. It was not only Odysseus, but also the Roman galleys and medieval caravels, who approached Scylla and Charybdis with dread. Our ambition now was to pass through the straits without the engine so as to get some idea of what our predecessors of thousands of years had experienced. Ad-

mittedly we had many advantages compared with Odysseus: a modern rigging which enabled us to luff, charts and particulars of currents, and above all the engine to save us in emergency; but on the other hand our ship was considerably smaller than his. I will not deny that we were rather tense this night as we neared the gap between the shipwrecking Scylla and the ship-swallowing Charybdis. Goethe philosophizes eloquently in the account of his travels on the difference between fact and fiction, when his fellow-passengers point out to him off Messina "a slight movement in the water" as Charybdis and "a rock emerging from the shore" as Scylla. But the perspective from his frigate—the navigation of which he had nothing to do with, moreover—was very different from what we saw from *Daphne's* low deck. True, no hideous beast of prey stretched out its necks after us from the little coast town of Scilla on the Calabrian side, only the revolving arms of a kindly lighthouse; but Charybdis' whirlpool, splashing and glittering like a rapid as it came into view to starboard under the Sicilian coast, was all the more treacherous this night because of the full moon, which made the tidal currents extra-strong.

We tried first to tack up toward Scilla's lighthouse, but if anything we were driven backward by the current. Not until dawn, which found us rather tired and wan after the fourth night on end without sleep, was the wind fresh enough to help us gain on the current. According to our *Nautical Instructions* the tide was to turn about seven o'clock, but at nine it was still streaming stubbornly against us, thereby confirming the paragraph at the end of the eight-page long and very involved description of all currents, countercurrents and tactical navigation hints for the passage at all hours and under all conditions of wind: "During the months of April to December the current often flows in the very opposite direction to that indicated above." We put the book away and followed our own common sense, which, with the help of good luck, succeeded beyond expectations. Near Charybdis we were suddenly



seized by a southbound current, with which we literally flew toward Messina, while fishing boats closer inshore flew in the opposite direction in the countercurrents. Off Messina's pier we met the train ferry bound for San Giovanni on the mainland, it too advancing tactically on the slant. Farther on in the straits we got a good following wind and were now steering only a few yards from the plainly visible dividing line between the parallel countercurrent. Not until we were off Reggio did we change around, and soon we slipped neatly into the calm waters of the harbor between the tall arms of the pier. We had succeeded in our venture and would long remember it. The whole of this morning trip in the radiant summer weather, with the water seething mysteriously and the sails taut in the strong, cool wind, was one of the most exhilarating sails I have known.

In the big harbor of Reggio we found a delightful spot a little to the side, where we moored by the customs jetty and were received with great kindness. But we also received the news of the outbreak of the war in Korea, which threw a dark shadow over our bright horizon. We were a long way from home and on the point of sailing still farther. But we did not hesitate for long. As a Swedish-Finn I had known—and somehow survived—so many threats of disaster since 1939, that I had a fatalistic attitude to world politics. War in Korea. All the more reason to sail to Greece while it was still possible.

## TO ITHACA

REGGIO DI CALABRIA, the capital of the Italian mainland's southernmost province, turned out to be a well-built, modern city, by no means so "behind" as one would expect in this neglected part of the country. The many pleasant outings in the neighborhood were very tempting, but the strict demon of our voyage was urging us on inexorably.

I use this impersonal word "demon" deliberately, as many years' experience has taught me that not even a yachtsman ever alone decides when he shall leave port. It is always wind and weather, the necessity of doing this or that ashore, the constraint of having to arrive in time on a certain day, in short, external reasons which decide when he sets sail. There is a marked propensity to hide every trace of personal wishes and needs behind seemingly objective arguments, and a disinclination to disguise the coercion in a voluntarily accepted "all the better." Why is the sailor so afraid of uttering the dangerous words "I will," which the landlubber makes no bones about saying? Probably because sailing is a far too primitive occupation, too much under the control of the forces of nature, Providence and the unknown. All seamen are superstitious, though they need not necessarily sacrifice to the gods, mutter ritual incantations or watch out for unlucky days and omens. The symptoms are already there when you hide your own will for fear of challenging fate. The picture of the Madonna and the barometer are equally useful instruments for this subjection, this need of placing yourself under the protection of higher powers. At the moment of decision the gray-haired skipper steps up to the round idol on the wall of the

cabin, consults the oracle by tapping on the glass and is instantly reassured by the certainty and high authority of Science. What is the difference between him and his fellow-sailors of old who lighted sacrificial fires to Poseidon and watched the smoke rising up to the sky? One god has replaced another, man's reaction to the unknown remains the same.

We too reverently consulted our oracle in Reggio's harbor, tapped on the barometer, which was as high as it could go, listened to the weather reports on the radio, which were the best imaginable and from all this drew the conclusion that the Powers-That-Be were giving us the chance we needed. The longest sea cruise of the summer was ahead of us, 250 nautical miles with no land, from Sicily to the Ionic Islands of Greece, a voyage which was possible for *Daphne's* insufficient crew only in good weather. We would rather have started at once, but we had not only to replenish our stores but also get a good night's sleep before again risking keeping watch for two or three days and nights.

The direct route across the sea to Kefalonia was not the only one open to us. The usual and safer route to Greece for small boats is via the Italian boot's heel across the relatively narrow straits to Corfu, an island that greatly enticed us. This way was considerably longer, however, and the calendar already said July 1. To be quite honest, the sea itself enticed us too. It is easy to be a bullfighter if you keep near the barrier the whole time and can slink in behind its protecting palisade whenever the bull attacks. Only when he meets his opponent in the middle of the arena does the bullfighter become the beast's equal and magically acquire its qualities in his own personality. It may be practical to sail along the coast from one port to the next, but it does not offer the deep satisfaction of unreservedly entrusting yourself to the sea. Every long voyage must include at least one such experience, else you cannot, like Odysseus, return home as a brother of the sea who has mixed with gods and nymphs as an equal.

Saturday, July 1st, was as radiant as the previous day. We thoroughly restocked our larder and also had time to eat an excellent lunch on board the Finnish steamer *Arabella* from Turku, which was unloading at the pier, before we headed out, feeling gay and mellow, onto the glittering water of the straits. The start of a journey has seldom been more favored by the forces of nature. Borne by a strong current and a following wind that bellied out every stitch of canvas, we steered toward the southern entrance of the straits between shores that sped past as though seen from a train window. Soon Etna's majestic cone appeared in the bend, incredibly big and puffing ash-gray clouds up into the sky, and faraway at Taormina white lateen sails shone beneath the blue mountains of the coast. But alas, our good speed was a faithless companion. At Capo d'Armi, where the Straits of Messina end, the wind dropped; it was evidently only a local breeze, and even the current grew noticeably weaker. Ahead of us lay the sea, indolent, endless and flat.

At the cape we turned off to the east and followed the Calabrian coast. Just before sunset a little boat rowed by two men put out from the shore, straining to intercept us. It was twenty minutes before the exhausted fishermen were alongside and able to offer their fish for sale with appealing gestures. We bought willingly and five times too much, as we knew that *Daphne* looks like a large, well-manned, magnificent ship at a distance but shrinks like a taunting mirage as you get nearer. These fishermen could be glad that the whole of their beautiful vision did not shrink away altogether and that, in spite of everything, a boat was left the same size as their own.

At dusk the last puff of wind died away, Mona fried some of the newly bought fish and we had a peaceful dinner on deck as the moon rose. Both of us would much rather have gone to bed after dinner, as there was no sign of any wind and the lights of the same little town, Melito, were obstinately reflected to port, but it would have been foolhardy not to keep a lookout off this coast where there

was so much traffic. Mona took the first watch and the skipper turned in. When I peered out at midnight it was still quite calm, but we were no longer off Melito. How was that? Suddenly I discovered Capo d'Armi's lighthouse on the bow: the current was sucking us rapidly back into the Straits of Messina. Faced with this, the engine was started without hesitation. It took us nearly an hour to reach Melito against the current and another hour before we considered we had the current safely behind us. Then we stopped the engine, hung out a lantern and went to bed, leaving *Daphne*, with all sails set, to look at her reflection in the glassy, moonlit sea.

The sun was high in the heavens when we awoke and looked over a deck wet with dew, at the sea, still calm as a pond, but wonderfully fresh and newborn. Not even the discovery that we had drifted back to the eternal Melito could cloud our spirits. While the coffee was boiling we had a swim around the boat and were back on deck again just as the first faint puffs of wind started drawing dark lines across the bright surface. Our speed was not breath-taking, but we made quite good headway along the unexpectedly beautiful coast with wild, wind-blown mountains, villages encircled by vineyards, broad, dried-up river beds, below which millions of stones instead of water seemed to pour down into the sea. Under the merciless sun all this was far more desolate and bleak than any of the coasts we had passed on the way down, a parallel to our impressions of southern Spain the previous summer. There was a pleasant breeze under the awning we had put up, but from the land all kinds of country sounds could be heard surprisingly clearly—a car horn on the road, a cow mooing, the braying of a donkey—and they brought the blazing summer's day on shore almost painfully close to us.

At last, about two o'clock in the afternoon, we reached Capo Spartivento, the "wind-distributing cape," which, however, was not so impressive as its name and its dignity of being the Italian mainland's southernmost point had led us to believe. The coast just made a bend, and if it had not been for a tall lighthouse on the shore we

should not have known exactly where to say good-by to the land we were now leaving. The cape did manage to give us a little better wind; we hoisted the balloonier and made for the unbroken horizon of the sea in full sail. For the skipper, who lay steering with his feet and deep in the Odyssey, this departure was particularly impressive. Whichever of the small islands off Sicily you like to choose as Ogygia, the isle where the nymph Calypso held Odysseus captive, the hero on his raft obviously had to sail approximately the same way that now lay ahead of us, straight across the sea to Ithaca, with the polestar on his left the whole time as the nymph had advised him. We had just as fair a wind as that which the nymph summoned, and soon the empty ring of sea and sky was broken only by the faint shadow of a mountain in the west. Was it the thought of Odysseus and all his adventures which influenced my judgment, or did the boat that Mona suddenly drew my attention to after a few hours really resemble a pirate ship? It was a large open boat with tapering bows, furled lateen sail and rowed by eight sun-blackened men stripped to the waist. Its course left us in no doubt that it meant to intercept us. In this, as in other critical situations, we resorted to our engine; we saw with relief that *Daphne* could, if necessary, make a getaway, so we let the other boat approach to within ten fathoms. The men stopped rowing, eloquently lifted several inverted pitchers high and shouted:

"*Acqua! Acqua!*"

Reassured, but still a little doubtful, we let them come nearer. They were fishermen from Santa Maria di Leuca who had been four days at sea and had not a drop of drinking water left. We let them have fifteen quarts and were rewarded with a fine fish for dinner and profuse promises of intercession to the Madonna. This was the only boat we sighted during the whole of our crossing. It soon disappeared in the northwest, and at sunset we were again alone upon the sea. Out here the breeze did not seem to drop at nightfall and we sailed steadily on hour after hour in the moonlight. Not until

two o'clock at night did it die away; we furled our sails and fell asleep well satisfied with the second day of our voyage.

The breeze woke at once with the dawn and we hoisted sail. The sea rose, and after barely an hour was so rough, despite the moderate wind, that we wondered very much how the day would turn out. But the swell ceased as quickly as it had begun, it was obviously only the effect of the night's land wind from the plains round the Gulf of Taranto, and soon the sea was as peaceful as the day before. At noon the skipper took a bearing from the sun, a simple and reliable operation down here in the Mediterranean, where the sky is always clear. The log gave quite enough longitude, but it was a matter of keeping on the right latitude despite the currents, which according to the nautical handbook stream in and out of the Adriatic Sea.

The day would have been one of utter sloth if the skipper, soon after taking the bearing, had not sighted a large red buoy surrounded by something that looked like a fishing net torn loose by a storm. Why not salvage it? We steered toward the find and I managed with great difficulty to drag the heavy buoy on board. A steel wire with innumerable cork floats was fastened to the buoy and we were still convinced that there was a fishing net there, as a couple of dozen fat fish glistened and flapped about under the floats. But no net appeared, even though I soon had the entire foredeck cluttered up with coils of the writhing wire; the fish were obviously bound to the floats by psychic and not by physical bands. When there were only a few yards left they all lay shaken into a compact shoal beside the boat. Mona was just getting breakfast ready: here, if ever, we had the menu to hand. But it was trickier than we thought to get any of the fish up. We tried first scooping them up direct with a saucepan, but they were not quite as tame as that. They slid out of the colander too at the last second, and having tried in vain to catch them with our bare hands but found them too slippery, we ransacked the entire boat to find something that could serve as a

landing net or harpoon. Nothing could be found. Tantalized to desperation, I at last seized an ordinary table fork. It worked: a fat pilot fish—which they all were—at last flapped on the deck. Having stocked up well, we decided to let the rest go and I hauled on board the last floats to which the fish felt bound. But instead of dispersing, the homeless animals clung convulsively to *Daphne*. When we bent over the railing we could see the whole flotilla collected under our keel. From now on we sailed with a faithful escort of pilot fish, which, however, still loved their old home. The minute we let any of the cork floats trail after us in the wake all the fish collected there, and in this way we could draw on our living and self-transporting food supplies for every meal during the rest of the crossing.

Mona insisted on the wire and buoy being thrown overboard, and to the accompaniment of her acid comments I set to work with a pair of pincers to unwind the steel wires that held the cork floats in place. The wire was almost new and nearly forty fathoms long. Joined to our reserve anchor it might be invaluable in Greek harbors with little protection, but if I had known what a job I had taken on I would certainly have admitted my wife was right. The cork floats were attached at intervals of half a yard and there were more than 150. Luckily only a faint breeze blew all day and *Daphne* was able to steer herself. Mona lay demonstratively on the afterdeck writing letters, while I, smeared with rust to the roots of my hair and with my hands bleeding, wrestled with the wire. The floats not only had to be detached but also pulled off the rope onto which they were threaded like pearls. Not until sunset was the job done and the wire ready to be stowed under deck.

We had a late dinner under our swaying lantern; the wind had followed the sun to the west and the balloon jib was large and full in the moonlight as *Daphne* pushed forward across the foaming, phosphorescent sea. After the blazing heat of the day it was a delightful relaxation for tired senses to sit there encircled by the starry darkness and a night air so warm that we still had no need of clothes.



We sailed all night in this way, taking two-hour turns at the watch, and if the helmsman found it difficult to keep awake toward morning he was greeted cheerily now and then by unusually familiar dolphins. Mona was at the tiller when the first uninvited visitor appeared, and the skipper was awakened by an agitated:

"Göran, Göran, there's a *monster* here!"

Sure enough, right against the boat, we could hear a puffing sound rather like an asthmatic locomotive and a hissing snake. Fortunately we soon made out the glistening back of our companion in the moonlight and knew that we were not being pursued by a large sea serpent.

The sea was rough again for a few hours next morning, and then we had a pleasant and very indolent day's sailing. We were getting rather tired this fourth day at sea, but the log and the bearings from the sun showed we had not much farther to go. If all went according to plan the beacons of the Greek coast should be visible that night, which suited us very well, as it is always easier to make land with lighthouses as certain bearing points than to steer toward an anonymous coastline in the daytime. The day passed uneventfully; not a ship, not a cloud, only the unbroken line of the sea in the sunshine. Mona could bury herself in peace in the mysteries of the Greek alphabet, I in the *Odyssey*. At dusk I tried to take a bearing with the sextant from the polestar to make quite sure that we were really steering toward the straits between Kefalonia and Ithaca, but the swell was so troublesome that after repeated attempts I had to give up: there was no chance of getting the faintly shining star down onto the horizon from this rolling deck. Mona was very tired, but took the first watch after dinner. When I took over the tiller at midnight I began peering eagerly after lighthouses, and during the hours that followed I stared so intensely out into the darkness that soon I imagined I saw faint flashes now here, now there; but not a single lighthouse appeared in earnest despite the fact that according to the log we were barely twenty nautical miles from land. In the

bright moonlight I tried again with the sextant. The sea had gone down since sunset and the star shone brightly, but now the horizon was a blur. The result of my calculations was a position somewhere south of Zante, but this was too bad to be true. Perplexed and miserable, I watched the dawn break without any lighthouse having shown itself. Mona had fallen into a dead sleep and I had not the heart to awaken her; besides I could not leave the tiller until I knew where we were.

At four o'clock when the sky had already paled, I made a last attempt with the sextant, having screwed on the large telescopic sight to strengthen the star's luminosity. And now it worked! The polestar lay there on the thin thread of the dawn horizon like a gleaming drop of dew. It gave a sure bearing, according to which we were due west of Kefalonia's north cape. And sure enough, when the sun rose, a high cape appeared ahead and I could awaken Mona in triumph. It had taken *Daphne* four days to sail across the shoreless sea, not seventeen days as it had taken Odysseus, until we, as he had done, "descried the shadowy mountains like a shield on the airy-blue expanse of the sea." This arrival in Greece at sunrise, this first meeting with the bare mountains we had heard so much about, this meeting between Apollo's land and our northern *Daphne* which had borne us all the way from Finland's fir-clad inlets and Sweden's skerries, this moment was so unexpectedly moving, so overwhelming, that our tired eyes filled with tears.

The wind had almost died away and in the clear morning we went in by engine toward the blue and emerald mountains. The pilot fish, our faithful companions, were clearly upset by the noise of the engine, but dared not leave us altogether; they darted in wide arcs through the clear water around the boat like a festive escort. In a description of the coast we had read that close by the cape ahead there was a deserted little harbor inlet, Port Aterra. Why not go in there to rest after our voyage and to meet the eternal Greece, unchanged for thousands of years, before mixing with a lot of people

in a modern town? The partly wooded coast soon came nearer and we steered in through the narrows to our inlet, sheltered from the sea by a low rocky island. At the head of the inlet was a gleaming white beach, where two women were washing clothes, and not far up the valley was a solitary little farm surrounded by meager patches of tilled ground. The anchor plunged to the bottom with a clatter, the hum of the engine ceased and we found ourselves surrounded by the deafening song of the cicadas and the scent of spice from the *macchia* that filled all the sunlit air. It was some time before we discovered a tightly packed flock of sheep and a motionless human figure in the dark shade of some gnarled fig trees. As we were putting up the awning a miserable skiff darted out from the shore. In it were two shepherd boys, one of whom was rowing while the other, dressed in rags, stood in the bows with a flute between his fingers. He gave us a friendly grin and a tune floated across the water—harsh, delicate and as timeless as the chirping of the cicadas. If this was not a well-staged arrival in Greece I don't know what is!

Our conversation with the boys dashed all our hopes of being able to speak a kind of pidgin-Greek with the help of the phrase book. They understood not a word and only laughed at our explanations. At last, however, we did manage, by repeated use of the word *hypnos* (with a stress on the first syllable) and a packet of cigarettes, to make them understand that we wanted to be left in peace for a couple of hours to sleep. When we again woke about noon, the thermometer in the cabin showed a temperature of 95° F. The shepherds were still sitting on the beach in the shade of the fig tree and came at once to fetch us in the skiff. One of them had an army rifle with him, which made us a trifle wary, but his friendly expression reassured us. On the beach we were met by a farmer, so venerable and with such a patriarchal beard that we prepared to greet him with two of the few Greek words we knew: *Kyrie eleison*. He forestalled us, however, by braying in broad American: "Welcome to my house." Had we by mistake followed in the wake of Columbus

instead of Odysseus? The reason was soon forthcoming: like so many other poor Greeks, Temistokles Politis had emigrated to America when he was young and had come home with his savings when he was old.

"I worked for twenty years at the Ford factories in Detroit, but I never liked it over there. I came home to Kefalonia in 1936 and bought this farm here for two thousand dollars."

How anyone who had spent the best years of his life in the New World could transform himself in his old age into a Greek farmer and live in a timeless world of Hesiod, remained a mystery to us. At the farm there were no souvenirs from the golden land, not even a photograph of Detroit, and the only machine owned by this man, who had helped to manufacture millions of internal combustion engines, was an ancient curiosity with ΠΑΙΤΟΜΗΧΑΝΗ ΣΙΓΓΕΡ \* on it. We did, however, at last manage to discover one reminder of the New World: the names of Temistokles' two donkeys. They were called Jackie and Baby.

We sat on a stone bench in the shadow of the primitive but surprisingly clean and tidy house. A daughter came out with two glasses of tepid water and two small bowls of sweet cherry jam. It was the first time we were given this traditional welcome, which we were afterward to find in every home we visited, from wealthy monasteries to the poorest hovel. Temistokles also sent a son off to pick grapes from the vineyard, where the first ripe bunches were hanging in spite of its being only the beginning of July. We heard a lot about the war, which for the Greeks had ended only six months before with the victory over the partisans. Temistokles proudly showed us a whole arsenal of army rifles hanging in his cottage, badly needed during the grievous years when both belligerent parties had plundered his flocks of sheep and everyone on the lonely farm had lived in constant terror.

"But two sheep thieves are lying buried by the mound over there.

\* Singer Sewing Machine.

I know, because I buried them myself."

We had no reason to suspect our new friend of any but the best intentions and his hospitality was irreproachable. It was just that during our conversation he returned time and again to a fact that obviously engaged his thoughts: that there were only two of us on the boat and we were not even armed.

"Have you thought how valuable your boat is and that no one actually knows you're in Greece? The war's over, I know, but there are still unscrupulous people about," he explained. And a moment later: "What's a boat like that worth anyway?"

For the sake of Temistokles' peace of mind and our own night's sleep we decided not to spend the night in Port Aterra. Laden with grapes and followed by these worthy people's heartiest farewell greetings, we went on board about six o'clock and steered by engine out onto the glassy sea.

Kefalonia's north coast is high and treeless, with small white villages up on the bare mountain ridges. After our Spanish trip we thought we knew what whitewashed houses looked like, but these dazzling white villages that met us on all the Greek islands were something different. In Greece every house is whitewashed at least twice a year with lime and especially during the dry summer the villages look like towns of marble and snow. Our destination, Port Guiscardo, was behind the next point on the narrow straits to Ithaca. Guiscardo, unforgettable pearl among harbors! The sun had already gone down and an opal-blue dusk lay over the sea as we cautiously steered in between the heels of the archipelago at the entrance. The lighthouse keeper was up in his little tower busy cleaning the lenses before lighting-up time, and in the circular, ideally sheltered harbor a little flotilla of splendid fishing smacks was reflected, while kerosene lamps were lighted one by one behind the neatly ironed curtains of the houses. It was a sight at once more Scandinavian than any we had met elsewhere in the Mediterranean, a peep at a sleepy fishing village on the west coast of Sweden

at the turn of the century, but at the same time something very foreign and half oriental. The anchor went to the bottom in the middle of the placid harbor and as night closed in we sat on deck with a bottle of *Vino Santo*, unable to break the evening's enchantment and filled with a feeling of infinite well-being.

Port Guiscardo's inhabitants evidently found it harder to control their curiosity than we. As we sat sipping our wine a man rowed out and made rather peremptory gestures at us to go with him in to the quay. There we were met by Guiscardo's police and harbor master, who had put on their official caps in *Daphne's* honor, and the schoolteacher, who asked us in almost unintelligible French to sit down on two rickety chairs, the only ones on the quay. There we sat in the glare of a kerosene lamp and with most of the inhabitants in a ring all around us, a deathly still crowd of people barely visible in the darkness. The atmosphere was reserved, almost hostile, and I was glad to be able to pull out of my pocket the long and eloquent letter of recommendation given me by the Greek minister in Stockholm. It was the schoolmaster who, having polished his glasses, read the document aloud with a grave countenance to the assembled crowd and dignitaries. We understood very little of the contents, but saw the tense expressions relax; and when the schoolmaster came to the passage where I was described as an "archeologist" and "philhellene," two important epithets in Greece, everyone was all smiles. A sailor who spoke excellent Spanish came forward and assumed the role of interpreter, we found out that *Daphne* was the first yacht to visit Guiscardo since the war, but to make up there had been less welcome visits from Italian, German, English and Albanian patrol boats. From a near-by house, on the front of which we spelled out the word that was to become so important to us during the next few months, "*Καφελειον*," two small cups of coffee were sent out, the good, strong Turkish coffee which is served all over Greece, in the simplest farmhouse as well as the most expensive restaurant. We were also given the Greek

anise akvavit to drink, *ouzo*, which is drunk in vast quantities, usually with water. Our attempts to explain that we did not want anything, as we had no Greek money, only resulted in more being brought out. It was eleven o'clock before we got back on board after a day which, for us both, stood out as the best *Daphne* had ever given us.

When we looked out of the cabin quite late next morning, two fish, a bundle of spinach and a large melon were lying on the deck, anonymous gifts from kindly Guiscardo people. The harbor master had asked us to look in and see him to admire a book which a famous archeologist had given his father, and he was already walking expectantly up and down the quay. We sat for a whole hour in his shady garden dipping into one of Dörpfeld's books about Olympia, sure enough with a personal dedication in Greek. Our Spanish-speaking friend then took us for a walk in the blazing heat to see the supposed remains of Robert Guiscard's 11th-century fortress, which was really more of a rock tomb. We were much more impressed by an ancient sarcophagus we discovered on the way back. It was lying tipped up on the seashore, half buried in sand and washed clean by a million waves—a vision of grandiloquence no longer met with in Italy.

Just as we were about to go on board to weigh anchor, an elderly woman with a mustache and a fantastic get-up, carrying a large parasol, asked in perfect French if "four young girls of good family" might visit our boat. Rather taken aback we murmured an amiable "Yes, of course," and after a while the precious cargo and the bearded chaperone were rowed out by a fisherman. The chaperone introduced the young beauties, who unfortunately could only speak Greek:

"This is the daughter of the borough council's president, the richest man in Guiscardo, who among other things has built our school, where I teach. This is her friend from Athens, this is the daughter of a cousin of the former minister Joannidis, and this

girl is engaged to the son of a cotton-mill owner in Alexandria."

The girls were modestly dressed in light frocks with long sleeves; they giggled incessantly at anything at all and were very sweet, all four of them, but the schoolmistress really fascinated us more. It was pathetic to hear her describe life in Guiscardo before the war, when there were still "a few good families." The chance of speaking French seemed to intoxicate her completely and we did our best to shelter ourselves from her eloquence, which, like a finely diffused shower composed of thousands of drops of saliva, rained down on our heads. Amid constant peals of laughter the girls each wrote a whole page of Greek—undoubtedly poetic but very hard to decipher—in our guest book; all I managed to make out was the expression "the noble strangers" repeated each time. The visit ended by our being thanked with choral singing: patriotic, religious and gay songs all mixed up. This was our first encounter with the typical ingenuousness which radically distinguishes the Greeks from other Mediterranean peoples, but has such striking counterparts in Finland and in the Baltic countries before the war. There, too, strangers on a journey are regaled with folk songs and you feel thousands of miles away from the irony and reserve in the presence of outsiders which often characterizes old nations. Greece, which until a hundred years ago was merely a people, is still in the infant stage as a nation, the most endearing and understandable age when everything is still faith, hope and charity.

It was eleven o'clock before we left Guiscardo in the rising sun breeze and steered toward Ithaca.

There have been many definitions of the word classical. Most of them try to see its characteristic in harmony, proportion, the perfect balance of contrasts. But this is not enough; there is an essential difference between the classical and the mediocre, which is also balance. For this reason it is usually insisted that the con-



trasts to be balanced must be strong and important ones. The greater the tension between, for instance, the lust of the flesh and the soul's demand for purity, between a logical striving for clarity and emotional ecstasy—to quote one or two common antitheses—the nobler the classicism that succeeds in bringing them harmoniously together. But does classicism always need two conflicting passions to give it birth? Does it demand, for example, that patriotism conflicts with an ardent love of another country or that sensuality burns in the breast of the puritan? Is there no classicism for a solitary and dominating passion? One definition, expressed by André Gide among others, is that classicism is based on a central attribute which counteracts the impulse of passion and ecstasy to drive to extremes, that is, which has no need of a symmetrical counterbalance. This attribute is modesty, self-control, satire or whatever you like to call this moderation imparted by upbringing—so typical of the French view of life—below whose surface a keen ear can sense the controlled but glowing presence of passion. It is a definition which is probably right as far as Poussin and Racine, Cézanne and Gide himself are concerned, but on this morning, as we sailed toward Ithaca, it struck me that the ancient classicism has quite a different basis: it is not primarily psychic equilibrium or emotional control, but something which may be called, rather abstractly, a phenomenon of compensation.

The human body is an organism created for work and it cannot live if it does not function. An arm held motionless for some hours must have movement if it is to remain healthy; not until it has worked hard does it demand comparative rest. The same law applies to the psyche: if forced into immobility, it develops a need of activity which finds an outlet in various ways, from the night's profuse dream flora to the magnifying of petty everyday worries. If, on the other hand, one's mind is occupied with responsibilities and constant change, quiet is the greatest need. It was not just by accident that the poverty-stricken, monotonous life in the Islamic

trading cities gave rise to the least classical of books: The Arabian Nights with their dreams of fabulous treasure, adventure and delights. It is also natural that life in our modern ant heap has become deeply anticlassical in its attempt to compensate for the paralyzed functions. Classicism arose, on the other hand, out of Odysseus' longing for home, as he floated about with his ship surrounded by wonderful adventures; Ithaca, his cool Penelope, common sense and wisdom then became his ideal. As long as the life of the Greeks was such that they had sufficient, and more than sufficient, outlet for their mental powers in their everyday work, as long as their national life bound them completely, their art expressed a need of balance and healthy rest. The sensible and logical element in this art further emphasizes its calm: what is more restful than a rational and intelligible world? Not until existence was vulgarized during the Hellenistic age was the old Homeric tradition broken. In anticipation of the still more hazardous art of the early Middle Ages, an art arose that made possible the grandiose figures of the Pergamon altar, the irrational spaces of Baalbek architecture and the romantic raving of the eclogues. Classicism arose anew when the mental life of the individual became healthy again and the many artificial needs of compensation fell away: then the angels at the doorway of Rheims Cathedral smiled and the robust harmony of Giotto bade new generations rest. The great mistake was made in the 17th century of beginning to regard classicism as the actual ideal, as the cause of a healthy life instead of its effect. Telemachus was then the hero instead of Odysseus, and people started forcing their way out to Cythera instead of home to Ithaca. Romanticism was born, and with it our homelessness.

All this poured confusedly through my brain as we sailed away from Guiscardo. Perhaps it was mostly an attempt to associate my admiration for the classical with this glorious sailing weather and with Ithaca's high dragon's back covered with silver-gray shrubs, our destination.

But before steering toward the island that was Odysseus' home we made a wide tack over to the neighboring island of Leucadia. A warm sea breeze and drenching sun caressed our tanned bodies as with spurting bow wave we reached the Leucadian cliff, blue in the direct light. From the top, 700 feet up, where a temple of Apollo once stood, Sappho is supposed to have thrown herself into the sea to find solace for her unrequited love. This misty-blue promontory, washed by the glittering sea, looked so fresh, so eternally young, that our hearts missed a beat as we heard through the roar of the breakers a cry that seemed to us like Sappho's death shriek, but was perhaps only a gull. *Daphne* shuddered as she went about in the seething water beneath the point of the cliff. Our next tack brought us to Ithaca's eastern coast. The wind was fresh and we were soon passing the first little harbor inlet, with a fishing village so Arcadianly inviting, so neat despite its poverty, that we had half a mind to put in there. But we had already succumbed to the temptation of two unforeseen harbors and we went on steadfastly toward the Bay of Vathy, where the island's capital is. Once into the wide gulf we were left in the lee of the high coast. The wind limit was a good mile from land, and as we lay becalmed we saw the passenger boat from Patras making for Ithaca—a steam yacht from the year one with clipper bows and two rakish ornamental masts, rolling dizzily and black with passengers—one of the notorious Greek purgatories through which the ordinary traveler reaches the paradise of the islands. We lay for nearly two hours without wind, but about three o'clock the stationary mass of air lifted and small white-capped waves danced all the way out from the cliff and *Daphne*, her sails filling, sped in through the narrow straits leading to Vathy.

The capital of Ithaca has one of the most amazing natural harbors I have seen, a fiord surrounded on all sides by high mountains. If it were not for one or two caiques moored at the quay and the southern whitewashed houses, one might be on a north-Italian

lake. The wind was blowing straight into the semicircular shell of the harbor as we made a swishing rightabout turn a few yards from the quay, dropped the anchor and got our angrily flapping sails down without a hitch—one of those perfect landings so apt to misfire when there are a lot of people watching. There was no lack of spectators to complain of this time. It was six o'clock in the afternoon and tradespeople and their families were sitting on the balconies outside the trim houses along the quayside enjoying the sea breeze after the heat of the day. One café was built on piles over the water, with no walls and with dry palm branches as a roof; from there the gentry of the town craned their necks, from Ithaca's two wealthy shipowners, the harbor master in his white uniform and the chemist in a Gladstone collar, to unassuming shopkeepers, retired barge-skippers and the local bad hat, all collected in this unofficial club as on every summer afternoon. Oddly enough, we immediately felt at home in Vathy, whose small but well-built houses, shaded by trees, bear a striking resemblance to the 18th-century buildings of our Scandinavian provincial towns—obviously because they built in the classic way in Greece even during the palmy days of the national styles. Every house in the little town was visible to us from our anchorage, Vathy being built in the form of an amphitheater on the slopes around the harbor. While we, delighted and surprised, were studying this view, so unlike Italian and French Mediterranean towns, the harbor master, accompanied by an extremely blasé, distinguished ten-year-old boy who could speak several languages, came out to us in a sloop rowed by two uniformed sailors. The boy, who was the son of Ithaca's wealthiest shipowner and went to an aristocratic boarding school in England, was to act as interpreter and was so elegant that he spread out a handkerchief on the seat of the cockpit before daring to place his white trouser-seat on it. We were received kindly but not effusively as we stepped ashore: Vathy had already been visited by two foreign yachts and with its 3,000 inhabitants was, in con-

trast to Guiscardo, a place with all the ambitions of an island capital to urbanity and self-assurance. But we were eyed with all the more curiosity when our backs were turned.

Ithaca was not entirely new to me. Long before our Greek trip was decided on I had read about the island in the Swedish-Finnish poet Emil Zilliacus' *Pilgrimages in Hellas*, and he had also told me himself about his visit here before the first World War. Now that I myself was on Ithacan soil I was sorry I had not thought of asking Zilliacus the name of the cultured schoolteacher who had given him lessons in Modern Greek. But reality is often full of such incredible coincidences that they would never be accepted in fiction. As the proprietor of Vathy's one and only little hotel could not speak a single foreign word we decided to go to the chemist's in the hope of finding someone who could advise us how to get some money changed. Sure enough, an elderly man, the chemist's uncle, offered instantly to go with us; but first of all, as a true Greek, he asked us to have coffee or a glass of *ouzo* with him at the near-by *kafeneion*. As we were sitting there I happened to mention my nationality and our host gave a little melancholy sigh: "I once knew a man from your country. We often used to sit in this very café." It was none other than the schoolteacher himself—Mr. Katsamas—a courtly, charming old man, who was now retired. He had a vivid recollection of Zilliacus: "There's a poet for you! You should have seen him in the Nymphs' Cave—he recited long passages in Greek from the *Odyssey*, which he knew by heart, *il était transporté!* And in the evenings, every evening, we drank Ithaca wine in the garden over there." For Katsamas our visit to Ithaca was like the return of part of his youth, and the hospitality he showed us from this moment knew no bounds.

In the afternoon we lifted the Lambretta ashore to go for a little outing. The road we took was supposed to be all right for cars and we did meet a battered old Fiat, with twenty passengers clustering to it like bees, but it could not turn this donkey track into a car

road. We left the Lambretta by a little church, Hagios Georgios, and went on by foot along a back-breaking goat track to our goal, the so-called Castro Ulysse on the top of Mount Aetos. Schliemann has excavated a small prehistoric acropolis here, and English archeologists have recently found a large number of potsherds in geometrical style at a spot near by. The solidly made Cyclopean walls, the excellent possibilities of defense and the extensive view across sea and islands, make Castro Ulysse an impressive place, where one can happily spend a couple of hours speculating about the reality of history and the power of myth.

There are few places where myth and history are so strangely mixed up as in Ithaca. While the people of Ithaca know deep down of course that the Odyssey is only a legend, a poem born of the imagination of one or more poets, and has therefore never happened anywhere, it does not prevent them from regarding Odysseus as someone fully as historical as Napoleon is for the Corsicans. Oddly enough, in this self-deception they are in the good company of a whole lot of earnest archeologists, from Schliemann, for whom Odysseus was just as much a historical fact as Agamemnon and the Trojan War, to the English archeologist Miss Benton, who in our time has tried to find out where the renowned seafarer's palace lay. Dörpfeld's attempts to place the Odyssey on Leucadia, the neighboring island to the north, which according to him was formerly called Ithaca and where he certainly has unearthed Mycenaean tombs—they are to be found on most of the Greek islands—understandably arouse a holy wrath in Ithaca. But the comic thing is that Ithaca itself is split into two hostile camps, each with its own localization of Odysseus' palace. The one we visited on Mount Aetos is the right one according to the people of Vathy. They also believe that it was in the Bay of Vathy that the Phaeacians put the hero ashore and that the Nymphs' Cave is above their town.

If the beautifully situated cave near Vathy is the right one, Odysseus certainly needed Pallas Athena's help to carry his cargo

of treasure to its hiding place—this was our spontaneous reflection during the laborious two hours' climb up steep tracks to the cave the following afternoon in the company of the fat and panting harbor master. It was here that Emil Zilliacus, according to Katsamas' description, was "*transporté*"—and no wonder, for the cave almost surpasses the description in the *Odyssey*. It has one entrance for humans, narrow but negotiable, and another for gods—a little hole in the roof through which Apollo, in the form of a sunbeam, can float down onto a primitive sacrificial altar, the one trace of culture in this virgin spot, penetrated only by shepherds and an occasional tourist.

The *Odysseus* saga was localized for the second time on the following day, when we visited Stavros on the north side of the island. Setting off at five o'clock in the morning on our invaluable *Lambretta*, we worked our way up along wide zigzag bends to the pass on the narrow tongue of land joining Ithaca's northern part to the southern, past Elysian bays where the breakers boomed against lonely beaches and the morning sun gleamed behind the trunks of the olive trees. This road too was like a donkey track, but the morning was so fresh and our rapture so great that we thought nothing of tacking between boulders and lifting the motorcycle across ravines scooped out of the road by the winter rains. At Stavros we were hospitably received by the doctor, Dr. Kouvaras, who was an old friend of Katsamas. He bore most laudably with our distorted ideas about *Odysseus*' living conditions seeing that he, as we soon discovered, was the spokesman of the Stavros inhabitants' claim to be village neighbors of *Odysseus*. It was no doubt our ironic comments on the long way to the Nymphs' Cave above Vathy that made him forgive us our inconsiderate words about Castro Ulysse. Doctor Kouvaras proudly showed us the museum he had started, where there was a little collection of Mycenaean and geometrical pottery and one or two bronze objects—"Odysseus' egg cup and Penelope's pothook." Close beside it lay the palace

(or rather one or two ordinary round stones which unfortunately were all that remained) and our guide pointed out that it was the only spot on the island from which, as Homer expressly says, the sea can be seen in four directions. In the face of such incontrovertible evidence we could only capitulate and admit to Doctor Kouvaras that Schliemann was a poor archeologist. The great prophet in Stavros is, instead, Miss Benton, who has vigorously disputed the Vathy inhabitants' claims during all the years she has been excavating on the island. After the museum we were shown "Homer's school," an ancient tower in the shade of an olive tree and, as our cicerone mentioned, still a weighty proof to Vathy's disadvantage. The day was very hot and we did not feel up to visiting the "real" Nymphs' Cave, in comparison with which the one we had seen the previous day "was at the most a haunt of Eumaeus' herds of swine." Instead we made our way down to the little circular Police Bay, whose name—police means town in Greek—is, in my opinion, the only real evidence that the capital of the island was ever on this side of Ithaca. Neither of us had ever before had such a swim as this solitary bay offered us. We lay in the tepid yet cooling water for two hours and slept our siesta sleep with our heads resting on the polished stones. The blazing sun fell like a glinting rain of gold over the rocky ground, far away behind the cypresses and stone pines there was a glimpse of the white cupola and cross of Stavros church, the crickets chirped as though bewitched among enigmatic fragments of wall bared by the archeologist's spade and outside the straits shimmered the little island of Asteria, where the suitors lay in wait for Telemachus.

Ithaca, Ithaca, what historic place can compete with you as regards the perception and multiplicity of memories; fabled isle with the contours of your shores seemingly bent in keeping with the stage directions of the greatest poem written by man. Your sea is assuredly now "rippling," now "holy" and at noon, when the sun pierces the clear depths, "red as wine." Your physical features are



purser, your sky more lofty than those of all other Greek islands, and your very night—cool and starry, coming after the quivering heat of the day—is Elysian and taught me to understand the meaning of “the ambrosial night” in the *Odyssey*.

We stayed only a few days in Ithaca—all the rest of Greece was beckoning us on, but we made full use of the time. Every morning we got up with the sun and every evening we sat with the worthy Katsamas drinking the wonderful Ithaca wine, which proved to be the only wine in the world with the surprising quality attributed to it by our host: “When you have drunk a lot of it in the evening you sing in the morning.” The day of departure arrived inexorably. Katsamas came down and presented a wreath of jasmine to Mona and two sprigs of laurel to me: “Daphne (laurel) to *Daphne*.” He wrote a long poem in our guest book in Ancient Greek, and even my defective knowledge could make out the words “Apollo’s light” and “the northern *Daphne*.” Now that the whole of our voyage is behind us, we almost regret having moved on so soon from the first stage of our Greek adventure, which was perhaps the most consummate and unclouded. One thing is certain, however: that we took with us from Ithaca the knowledge that the whole of the Greek wonder rests on Homeric ground. The poet’s greatest duty has always been to praise, for only by charging existence and each separate object with the love and veneration expressed by praise does one give what is praised value and significance for mankind. Only through praise is the world born in our consciousness—that is a truth of which the ancient poets were just as aware as the great praisers of our time: Blake, Wordsworth, Rilke, Claudel, Saint-John-Perse.

It was Homer who transformed these stony mountains and bare coasts into Hellas and exalted a rude peasant and pirate race to the equals of the gods, the Hellenes. He did this by praising. Homer praises almost everything, from heroes and kings to swineherds and wet nurses. In his description every spring flows forth crystal clear,

every house is well built and splendid, every tree is heavy with fruit, every ship is fast, every weapon well forged, every dawn sacred and every night ambrosial. He even ascribes to the man-eating Cyclops Polyphemus a skill in milking and making cheese which one must delight in, and he cannot help calling Thersites, the only malevolent character in the *Iliad*, "a speaker with a clear voice." This ideal and divine world which Homer gave his countrymen became for them the basis of all their subsequent conception of reality. With its bright optimism it also forms the background to the darkest tragedies in Greek cultural life and still has a living reality for us, not only when we are borne to Ithaca by kindly winds.

## ST. ANDREW'S WELL

OUR DEPARTURE from Ithaca should really have taken place early in the morning, as the next run was every bit of sixty nautical miles and there are no safe harbors between Vathy and Patras. We were also used to sailing at night, of course, but the harbor master at Vathy had warned me that the entire entrance to the Gulf of Corinth was heavily mined and that it would be wise to pass through the narrow swept channel in daylight. However, it took longer than expected to say good-by to our Ithacan friends, what with visits, visits repaid and long effusions in our guest book, which during the months in Greece had more pages filled up than during all the years we had owned *Daphne*. We also spent an unusually long time making ready for sea, as it was very windy this particular morning—far more so than during the whole of our voyage down, though the harbor master described it as “normal.” The Lambretta was lashed securely to its bunk, the dinghy was stowed as usual on the afterdeck and we got out our strongest storm sail of the Ljungström type.

At last, about two o'clock, we got under way on our engine. The wind in the narrow straits was head on and an angry, choppy sea drenched the whole boat with spray. Now and then the gusts were so furious that the water whirled around us and despite our twenty-four horsepower we made very little headway. Fortunately we did not have to force our way against the wind like this for very long. Once past the points at the entrance to the straits we got the wind on the quarter and could stop the engine. I hoisted one sail after the other, soon they were all like arched bows against the sky

and *Daphne* skimmed over the glistening wave tops at a dizzy speed. We had never had such a run before the wind. White foam hissed all around us on the blue-black sea and to the west the island contours of Kefalonia and Zante made a blue haze above the surging waves. Sunshine, a salty tang of iodine in the air and a caressing warmth turned the world into a paradise for two naked, tanned and gloriously free children of nature. The stony coast of Ithaca vanished in the sun haze almost before we had time to look back at it, but new high dragon's backs loomed up ahead—barren, sunbaked, rocky islands with no sign of human habitation. It was hard work holding the boat on course in the huge waves; after three hours I handed over the tiller to Mona with exact instructions about the course and turned in to collect my forces for the night's tussle. Despite our record speed it was obvious we would not make Patras before sunset. Mona was in blissful ignorance of the mine field and would continue to be so if all went well, having once and for ever asked not to be reminded of the small but nevertheless existing chance of a rapid end to our voyage.

Thanks to the hammock in the saloon I did manage to fall asleep despite the heavy sea and was dead to the world for a couple of hours. Not until the boat started pitching in quite a new way did I awake and peer out. The wind had dropped suddenly and we lay drifting in a murderous ground swell off Cape Papas at the mouth of the Gulf of Corinth. The change was evidently due to the sunset: the glowing disk, blurred by the haze and as burned out as a dying fire, was already half below the horizon, leaving us on a pallid, sloppy sea. As we stared uncertainly to the west, where the wind had come from, there was another change. The minute the last red rim of the sun had disappeared it began to blow again—but now from the opposite direction. In ten minutes we were battling against a headwind just as strong as the following wind we had had during the day. There was only one thing to do: start the engine, as tacking in the narrow mine channel was out of the question. We

furled the sails and began heading against the wind across a battle-field where waves fought like two hostile armies and spurting crests reached despairingly to the sky, until the forces from the east definitely got the upper hand. Darkness fell, the coast was blotted out and we had only the compass as a guide. We seemed to make no headway against wind and sea, and every wave sent pelting blows against our faces. The repulsive salt taste pressed down into our throats, our eyes smarted and the salt caked on forehead and cheek and felt like sand under our fingers. Treacherous, grim sea, only when the bitter cup has been drained after an exhausting fight against its unexpected rages, does one realize that the Mediterranean is more dangerous than all other seas, because it so often seems less dangerous.

The night before our arrival in Greece we had had our first experience of the lighthouses in this country. Seeing that the Greeks are a seafaring nation, living for the most part on islands and rock coasts by a stormy sea, it is doubly surprising that the lighthouses are so wretched and so faint. Those who sail in Greece should preferably be born and bred there and familiar with every contour of land outlined against the night sky, every village whose feeble lights in many fairways are the only landmarks. There are lighthouses and beacons of course, and on the chart they look completely reliable, but too often they are impossible to see until you are within a few boatlengths of them. Luckily the shoals in Greece, as everywhere in the Mediterranean, are sparse, and it is fairly safe to keep going until you see cliffs in front of you. Our nocturnal sail to Patras involved no navigational problems, as this city, which is the third largest in Greece after Athens and Salonika, had other ways of drawing attention to itself than with lighthouses. At first we steered toward the diffuse glow above the horizon, but soon the occasional lights from street lamps and windows appeared. Hour after hour went by, the waves poured over the deck and now and then the engine missed on the beat and went on only three or two cylinders,

probably due to spray in the ventilators. What would have happened to us if the engine had stopped I do not know; in any case it would have been no fun to run before the wind out to sea in the storm.

By midnight, after four hours' incessant drenching by the waves, we had managed to battle our way to Patras. The waves lessened and a breakwater loomed up ahead. But where was the entrance? Cautiously following the breakwater, we made out the feeble green leading light at the same moment as we sighted the actual harbor mouth. Seldom have I put into port with greater relief. It made no odds that large, grimy steamers were lying at the quays and that the city appeared to be the dreariest we had ever seen: a calm and sheltered stretch of water was all we asked. Frozen through for the first time that summer and dead beat from the tension, we dropped anchor in the middle of the harbor with only one thought: something hot to eat before we turned in. But the vigilant authorities of Patras had other ideas as to what we should do. A gold-braided man came rowing out to us and explained that *Daphne* must tie up at the quay to undergo prescribed formalities. After half an hour's bothersome maneuvering we at last lay with the bower outward and the stern to a stinking quay which, despite the late hour, was swarming with people; after which customs, health officers, immigration authorities and officials clamoring for harbor dues hindered us in a constant stream from even changing into dry clothes. When a man came to seal our nonexistent radio transmitter and another wanted me to sign an undertaking that none of the crew was suffering from venereal disease in an infectious stage and also asked if there was any sign of abnormal mortality among the ship's rats, I resolutely pulled in the gangplank. There *are* times when it is not flattering to be handled as a large steamer.

Even when we were planning our trip we were quite well aware that Patras is not one of the sights of Greece. We had only included it in our program as a necessary port of call for getting money

changed and revictualing, and our intention was to leave the very next morning after having collected our post and arranged all practical details. If anyone had told us that first morning when we woke up in the frightful heat, stink and dirt that our stay in Patras was to drag out to thirteen days, our hearts would certainly have failed us. As it was, we strolled through the teeming streets near the harbor as buoyantly as Napoleon through the plague camp at Jaffa. It is easy enough to show confidence when you think you are only paying misery a short visit. To our amazement, for the first time on our journeys we came on oriental bazaar streets and a wretched urban population, just as unstable and repellent as the people of the Greek countryside are attractive and deeply rooted in tradition. We learned in Patras that there are two Greeces, very unlike each other: the old western peasant Greece which we had known hitherto and a half-oriental seaport Greece with incompetence and Levantine business methods as the most visible outward characteristics.

We received our first setback when we tried to buy gasoline. No gas without customs permit, no customs permit without bank permit, no bank permit without a telephone call to the national bank in Athens and no telephone call without exorbitant "office expenses." When, dripping with sweat after trudging about for four hours in a temperature of 95°, we came back to the gas station with the desired document, we were told:

"I forgot to say that all gas stations have been on strike for three days."

How was this Gordian knot to be cut? Stupidly, we had not filled our tanks in Reggio and we simply had to have fifty liters of gas or kerosene before we could go on to Athens with easy minds. In this dilemma we decided to go to see the import and export firm of Zavela & Rodopulo, to whom we had a letter of introduction from the firm of Theodoridis in Stockholm. Oh, Greek offices with photographs of the King and Queen on the wall, with writing desks

that were modern in 1910 and with enormous ledgers in which industrious clerks engross masterpieces of calligraphy with spiky steel nibs! And you, admirable Mr. Arvanitakis, with your heart of gold hidden beneath a dictator's exterior, how you rolled your threatening currant eyes and chewed your mustache as you listened to our tale of woe, interpreted sentence by sentence by the firm's one and only linguist, the fair and charming Cleopatra! There was a temperamental cranking-up of the museum-piece telephone and eloquent but unfortunately fruitless discussions with banks, authorities and gas stations.

"You'll get your gas tomorrow, I promise you," Mr. Arvanitakis explained, looking as though he were Greek minister for war and had promised to send an army against the Turks. "But this evening I want to show you Patras! I'll call for you at seven o'clock."

As we sat sweating under *Daphne's* awning in the afternoon, gloomy because we were not already on our way, we saw a sight that seemed almost supernatural: a large white ship glided into the harbor. In these sordid surroundings it was like an apparition from a better world. It was too: on the stern we read *B. A. Börjesson, Hålsingborg* and from the flagstaff floated the blue and yellow Swedish flag. What benevolent god had sent us this unexpected deliverer? Captain Björck, a comforting and authoritative native of Skåne, listened sympathetically and promised us fifty liters of kerosene to see us through the Corinth Canal. But on one condition: that we got the permission of the customs for the transaction. The customs? What had they to do with it? In that case it must be a pure formality. We made straight for the large but shabby customs building and found a woman who could speak Italian. She put our case before an inspector, who, to our surprise, refused point-blank. Having reasoned with two other officials with equally negative result, we appealed to the chief customs officer. He read our official letter of introduction attentively and scratched his head in doubt. Of course he would like to help us, but the regulations were



precise: all liquid fuel in contact with Greek soil came automatically under the import restrictions. My proposal to moor *Daphne* alongside *Börjesson* and avoid this fatal contact was finally accepted as a feasible way out, but I must in any case, with the help of some scribe in the town, draw up a document on letter-headed paper and hand it over to the customs the following day for further consideration.

We did, however, have a very pleasant evening with Mr. Arvanitakis, Cleopatra and her sister. Our host hired a taxi which first took us to a rise overlooking the town. There we were shown something which seemed to fill all Patras people with pride: a brand-new radio station, given by the Americans, housed in a little brick villa. The director showed us all over the station and through a glass panel we even saw the young speaker announce *The Blue Danube*, which soon blared out through a loud-speaker among the pines outside the building. In Greece, which is poor and has no technical industry itself to speak of, all modern inventions are still regarded with reverence and burning interest. The next item in Mr. Arvanitakis' program was the sunset over the Gulf of Corinth, which was admired from a hill near by. It was certainly beautiful, with the high mountains on the other side of the water, Patras' jumble of houses at our feet and the harbor, where B. A. *Börjesson* lay like a swan among a lot of rusty brown ducks. But when Cleopatra earnestly exclaimed: "We wanted to show you the view, because it's the most beautiful anywhere in Greece," we knew that the thing to be admired here was not so much the landscape as a monumental local patriotism which was infinitely touching, as it was unmixed with disparagement of other countries and places. In its way it was just as pure as the instinct of a mother to whom her own child is more beautiful than all others. At the next halt, the town's little park, where there were real roses and a green lawn which was watered daily despite the acute shortage of drinking water, we had proof that Mr. Arvanitakis, too, was

fully convinced that Patras was one of the loveliest places in the world. "Well, what do you think?" he asked, with the same feigned indifference and ill-concealed pride as if he had been Louis XIV showing Versailles to visiting royalty. Few things are as moving as modest pride and joy in something in which we ourselves find no pleasure. It is brought home to us at once that the poor man with his illusion is richer than ourselves, and we do our utmost not to wake the sleeper to a hard reality. Mr. Arvanitakis did not appeal to us in vain. We praised his scraggy bushes and withered lawn more eloquently and enthusiastically than we had ever praised the fountains of Versailles or the roses in Florence.

"The King's garden in Athens is supposed to be even finer," Cleopatra confided. "But I haven't been there yet."

In front of the garden was a statue, a frightful, life-size old man in bronze, with bronze beard, bronze sword and bronze boots. Something warned me that respectful admiration was called for—mute, however, for safety's sake. Cleopatra soon came to the rescue:

"Yes, isn't he handsome, especially the expression of his face. It's Bishop Germanos, the champion of liberty from 1821."

To my shame I knew nothing of this great man, but although my knowledge of history let me down, I knew from my own experience just what patriotic memories mean to a little country which has had to fight hard and ceaselessly for its existence.

The last item was a visit to a church on the outskirts of the city, where our hosts invited us to kiss the ikons and pay our respects to the long-bearded priest. The church was called Hagios Andreas and was built close to the underground crypt that was supposed to be the apostle Andrew's house, unchanged since the saint lived there nearly two thousand years ago. To us, who had seen the apostle's bones and celebrated his festival at Amalfi, it felt almost like visiting an old friend as we stood in the narrow crypt. Like so many

Greek houses, this one had its own well in the kitchen and Cleopatra instantly filled a beaker which she invited us to empty. It was quite obvious that most of Patras' inhabitants had drunk from the same mug before us, but we quickly stifled our misgivings. As we came out again into the street Cleopatra laughed heartily and exclaimed:

"Now you have drunk from St. Andrew's Well! Don't you know that whoever does so can never leave Patras? It's an old legend which everyone here believes in."

Our joking assertion that we were leaving Patras next day seemed to hurt both her religious and her local-patriotic feelings. The constraint of having to remain in the most beautiful and modern of cities seemed to her a fate of unalloyed pleasure. "We're glad you're staying, because we like you," she explained warmly and sincerely on parting.

Next morning Mr. Arvanitakis helped us formulate the document required by the customs for the fuel, and after two hours we were ready to move *Daphne* alongside *Börjesson*. Then an astonishing thing happened: the engine refused to start and nothing would make it change its mind. Luckily there was no wind and I could tow *Daphne* with the dinghy to the side of the Swedish ship. The kerosene was lowered on a rope and the kind chief engineer sent two of the engineers to fix the engine. But although we worked all day in *Daphne's* cramped engine room we could find nothing wrong except a stubborn refusal to start. Next day the Swedish ship's entire technical staff, from the chief engineer to the electrician, joined in the game, but to no avail. The whole time we were the ship's guests: we were regaled with good honest Swedish food—a wonderful change to our usual southern diet—bathed in the chief mate's bathroom, were given the latest mine charts and to the last clung to the hope that the engine trouble would reveal itself to the eyes of all the experts. But all efforts were futile. After

two days *Börjesson* had finished loading and had to sail. We felt like an orphaned duckling when we were left alone in the odious harbor.

Mr. Arvanitakis now took charge and ran to earth a mechanic, "the most skillful in Greece," who was to repair the engine. Our palpable gloom made the kind Cleopatra and her sister arrange a little dance to cheer us up. The family lived in a three-room flat which in their eyes was almost the handsomest in the town, with linoleum in all the rooms, several oil paintings and a curtain of glass beads over the living-room door. The other guests included one or two neighbors, Mr. Arvanitakis and his wife and the sixteen-year-old son of one of the firm's directors. His name was Panayotis Zavela and he was a likable and splendid lad who was of untold help to us during the days that followed. We danced both tango and slow foxtrot to music from Patras' own radio, but Cleopatra's sister confessed that waltzing and cream cakes were what she simply adored. Cleopatra herself, who in her spare time played the violin in the town orchestra, wore a dress with embroidered music notes—an entire sonata which could be traced all around her podgy waist. Cleopatra's father, an official at the local railway station by profession, was a man with a military mustache and fierce eyes below short-cropped wiry hair—a figure that might have stepped out of an illustration of racial types in Brockhaus' *Encyclopaedia* from the year 1895. After the dance Cleopatra's mother served up a real Greek supper with masses of pungent, spiced sandwich savories, all washed down with a resinous wine which we now met with for the first time. To be quite honest it tasted more like turpentine or acetone and it amazed us to see the other guests sipping it with relish. For us this wine was the only ordeal of the evening, otherwise we were so warmed by all the kindness that when we left, long after midnight, we could answer our host and hostess in all sincerity when they asked anxiously if we had enjoyed ourselves.

The most skillful mechanic in Greece, on the other hand, caused

us trouble from the first moment. Under his guidance *Daphne* was moved to a jetty in the middle of the harbor, where the town's most fashionable café spread out its hundreds of tables around the old lighthouse and where Patras society sauntered up and down to enjoy the sea breeze and meet their friends. A famous singer from Athens, accompanied by an orchestra, was also appearing here. She was even rumored to have sung in Paris, where she had bought the elaborate toilet, worth over a million drachmas (about \$75), in which she displayed herself. An ample midriff gave excellent support to her voice, which was also reinforced by a loud-speaker. *Daphne's* position ten yards from her rostrum was the first of the services rendered us by our mechanic, a boon which, however, we were not able to appreciate to the full until we had heard the same ghastly repertoire performed every night for a whole week from nine o'clock until one in a voice that may best be described as *hairy*. The mechanic's second bright idea was that the engine must be taken ashore to a workshop. This gave rise to unheard-of bureaucratic and technical difficulties which had to be solved and co-ordinated. We went first to a scribe and calligraphist in one of the main streets, who for a moderate fee drew up an official document which, plus an "accelerating bribe," was handed in to be dealt with by the customs. The next thing was to negotiate with a firm that had the use of a caterpillar crane bought with Marshall Aid, which we were eventually promised—upon payment of 150,000 drachmas—would creep out onto the jetty and lift the engine ashore. But in the afternoon when everything was ready—the customs inspectors assembled, a draft horse ordered and the engine freed from its casing—there was a hitch. Neither the crane nor the horse appeared, and after waiting for two hours I went off to look for them. Behind the nearest warehouse to the west I found the crane operator lying resting on the roof of his machine.

"When I didn't see the horse there seemed no point in driving up," he explained.

Behind the nearest warehouse to the east the carter lay asleep on his dray.

"When I didn't see the crane I thought it best to wait."

When the horse and crane were at last in place the customs men had gone. It was after working hours, better luck tomorrow. It was very hot and we were very tired. Everything was so diabolically like a nightmare that the insane thought struck me: this is a dream, I must make an effort so that I wake up in my bunk and find that there's nothing wrong with the engine and that we're no longer in Patras . . . But for all my efforts the nightmare continued, and in the oily evening the famous singer started blaring out her songs, which we already knew by heart although we did not understand a word.

Next day, having bribed the sluggish crane operator with extra money, we got the engine onto a cart. The customs then weighed both horse, cart and load "to be quite sure that it was the same engine which was brought back after being repaired"—an ingenious thought which the horse, however, cruelly derided by leaving a large heap of manure on the scales. In the afternoon I went to the workshop on the outskirts of the town and found my Olympia taken to pieces down to its last particle. There was no discoverable fault, and the mechanic—he spoke tolerable Italian—sighed half in jest:

"You must have drunk from St. Andrew's Well!"

When I confirmed this he grew serious.

"You should have said so straight off and we need never have taken out the engine. There's only one thing to be done: you must go to St. Andrew with wax candles and beg for permission to leave Patras, otherwise you'll have to live here for the rest of your life."

The mere thought of such a doom filled me with rebellious and irreverent thoughts: we had already lost far too many of the summer's precious days with this idiotic superstition and hateful city. Partly to show the mechanic that St. Andrew's Well was superstition and partly to make a break in our nightmare I declared that

the very next morning, despite all magic obstacles, we would leave Patras and go to Olympia while he put the engine together again.

New formalities and petitions to the customs were necessary to get the Lambretta ashore, and not until twelve o'clock were we ready to set off, having entrusted *Daphne* to the care of Mr. Arvanitakis. But what was this? The Lambretta started, admittedly, but went badly, and hardly made the slightest gradient. Cross and despairing we went to "the most skillful mechanic in Greece," who took the carburetor and electrical system to pieces in a trice. There was nothing wrong, and the mechanic had only one explanation: St. Andrew. Not long afterward a monk in St. Andrew's church saw two strangers, bowing politely, step up to the saint and each place a substantial candle before the ikon. The strangers also saw the monk, the minute their backs were turned, snatch the candles to sell them to the next visitors. Skeptical and angry with ourselves we went back to the Lambretta at the church door, but lo! at the same instant it came to me in a flash that I had forgotten to shut the air valve after starting. A flick of the hand and the Lambretta was pattering as effectively as ever. Miracles still happen!

It was already late in the day, but what power could have kept us in Patras now that the road was clear! We sped along the coast road to the west on a newly laid asphalt surface comparable with the best in France and Italy. With roads like this ahead of us it did not matter so much that we had not started until six o'clock; the seventy-odd miles to Olympia should take three hours at the most and we would be there in time for a late dinner. But where roads are concerned Greece is full of surprises. It did certainly say in our *Guide Bleu* of the stretch Patras—Pyrgos: "*route en construction depuis 1912*," but even at a slow pace a road ought to be finished in thirty-two years. People we asked in Patras had in fact said that the road "isn't perhaps first-class all the way, but busses and trucks use it daily." Suddenly, in a little village, the asphalt came to an end. Our query as to where the road to Pyrgos continued was met

with a vague wave of the hand out into the countryside, and sure enough we found that the ground, to a width of about a hundred yards, was plowed up by wheel tracks. It was therefore not difficult to find our way, and when lucky enough to find the track of a large truck we could follow it for quite long stretches like a ditch until it petered out into a cross between drifting sand and dust. There we stuck fast, churning up huge clouds of dust in our efforts to reach a firmer base. We realized now why all the carts we had met had wheels about seven feet high, doubly necessary when rain turned the road into a river of mud. Now and then the sand was replaced by stones and for a mile or so the road would suddenly be quite passable, but in the main our speed was about that of a pedestrian. It was still worse when the sun set beyond the desolate plain. The little cone of light from our headlamp revealed at only a few yards' warning the next surprise this road had to offer, and that was by no means little. One moment it was a deep ravine into which we avoided plunging by a hairbreadth, the next it was one of those savage sheep dogs which are the terror of all Greece. With glaring wolf's eyes and gaping jaws they hurled themselves at us and gave chase for long stretches, while we raised our legs and opened the throttle wide. Occasionally we met a battered truck which never had more than one headlamp lighted, so that we had to give it a respectfully wide berth. Once we landed right in the middle of an invisible flock of sheep which had encamped on the road and another time some shepherds had lighted a huge bonfire by such a narrow passage that we were forced to drive through the flames. After all this we were hardly surprised when the road was suddenly blocked by a river. We stopped at a loss; there was no sign of a bridge and not a soul to ask. Luckily a high-wheeled cart came clattering along. We heaved our motorcycle onto it and were forded in this way across the torrent.

Any hopes we may have had of reaching Olympia that night had long since died and we were wondering if we should have to spend



the night in the open with no dinner or whether a modest inn could be found in any of the villages we passed. The first village was merely a few huts on either side of the road and so wretched that we did not even bother to stop. The next village consisted of tumble-down shacks in poverty's international style, which is the same in America, China and Africa—corrugated-iron roofs, walls of sun-dried clay bricks, sacking over the windows; but the promising word ZENO△OXEION, strangers' inn, scrawled over a door checked us. A crowd immediately swarmed around the Lambretta and someone ran off to fetch the emigrant home from America who is to be found in every Greek village. After a short parley between the hotel proprietor and the interpreter the latter said:

"The proprietor here advises you not to stay at his hotel, it's much too dirty. There's a better hotel about seven miles farther on at Gastouni."

Gastouni's *Zenodokeion* was no palace, but the proprietor, who was also a grocer and watchmaker, spoke passable English as a memento of five years in the States. We were dead tired and he showed us his establishment with such disarming kindness that we asked only one thing before accepting his beds: "Are there lice?" His assurances to the contrary turned out to be quite true, and we have only pleasant memories of our night at this typical village hotel. Admittedly dinner consisted of lamb stew without any lamb and the beds in the general dormitory on the first floor were made up with sheets that bore unmistakable signs of many previous guests. But everyone knows that water for washing is scarce during the dry Greek summer and the other guests, who had already gone to bed in the ten beds ranged along the walls, seemed genial and kind. When the host and hostess also, in nightshirts reaching to the feet, had climbed up into a magnificent double bed, the hotel was in fact full up. The sanitary arrangements were very practical: a trapdoor in the floor led down to the donkey stable. The night was hot and the smells were perhaps not the most pleasant, but we slept

like logs on the knobby mattresses and we awoke refreshed at five in the morning, when everyone got up. With true Greek politeness to strangers, we were offered the first use of the common washbasin, which was a metal container no bigger than a collection box hung on the wall. A small tap emitted a threadlike stream of water which sufficed to moisten the face. The host was very interested in art and entertained us over our morning coffee with descriptions of Praxiteles' statue of Hermes at Olympia, whose bodily position he plastically demonstrated with a blissful expression which left no doubt that he identified himself completely with the god.

The road was better after Gastouni, fortunately, and the last twelve miles from Pyrgos were excellent. The countryside here changes character and the monotonous plain is succeeded by partly wooded undulating country where the cypresses bend their paintbrush tops to the wind and one is reminded of Toskana. We stopped to photograph some of the beds outside every house along the road. In Greece the country people sleep out under the stars the whole rainless summer, and nothing gives a better indication of the climate's Arcadian mildness than these neat beds with soft pillows and white sheets which are everywhere part of the scenery.

Olympia is a place which it is very hard nowadays to associate with athletics, the excitement of races and the teeming presence of tens of thousands of people from the entire Greek world. The elegiac sighing of the wind in the pines, the winding river valley of the Kladeos and the gentle contours of the countryside invite tranquil meditation. There is no extensive view anywhere, no point from which the whole scene is clearly visible. Just as a sunken city is covered by the sea, the whole area has been invaded by giant stone pines and through their dense tops only a green and moving pattern of sun filters down onto temple bases, overturned columns and those thousands of blocks of stone scattered about which give

Olympia an air of a deserted churchyard. You can of course, map in hand, pick your way to Zeus's fallen temple, where once the god's fifty-foot-high gold and ivory statue was worshiped, but now the lion masks of the guttering roar impotently in the grass. You can also visit Pheidias' studio, where he created the famous image of the god that has now vanished without a trace, and you can admire the foundations of the celebrated shrine of Hera, the mother of the gods. Of the Stadium, where 40,000 spectators witnessed the athletes' triumphs, only the starting line of marble slabs has been excavated; the Hippodrome, scene of the horse races, has vanished utterly, and only the bases of Palestron's colonnades remain. It is especially moving to read the inscriptions on the blocks of stone that once supported the vanished statues of the Olympic victors, with the names of champions long since forgotten, but with birth-places which cause the heart to beat faster: Athens, Sparta, Elea, Mantinea, but also places in the empire—from Persia in the east to Spain in the west—that shared in the inheritance from Hellas through the Romans. Close to the ruins is the stone on which the Olympic torch of our times is lighted before being carried by runners to the cities of the modern Olympic Games in the world which Greek civilization has gradually conquered after two and a half thousand years.

All this is interesting and enjoyable to see, but having done so you are glad to sit in the shade of the stone-pines and let the hours pass by in peaceful contemplation of the power of memory to defy mortality. A hundred years ago all these stones were still buried beneath twenty feet of sand and mud which the River Kladeos carried with it after breaking out of its old bed during the Middle Ages. Everything was obliterated, and the name of Olympia survived only in books as a historical memory. It was the Germans who made what was probably their greatest contribution to classical archeology by their large-scale excavations here in the 1870's. Is it so surprising that this feat, which occupied the whole of the Ger-

man cultural elite and brought innumerable scientists, artists and ordinary travelers on explorations to Olympia, has meant so much to German classicism? Olympia's solemn forest mysticism, its archaic severity and misogynic athletic cult have given rise to quite a special view of Greece. Nietzsche and Stefan George are very much alive here at Olympia, but not in the Athens of Socrates or the Delphi of Apollo. It would be tempting to trace a similar connection between English classicism and the ownership for 150 years of the Parthenon sculptures and between French classicism and Delphi's crystal sunlight. The Greek heritage has many facets and each of us builds on the particle he himself has found.

We received our strongest impression during our visit to Olympia in the museum, where the unearthed gable sculptures of the Zeus temple are set up. Compared with them, even the Parthenon sculptures in London are changed into profane products of an age to whom the gods had become a myth. Style is religion. Just as the entire Egyptian death cult speaks to us from a spoon or a hair comb from the tombs of the Pharaohs, and the face of a prophet from a Gothic cathedral better illustrates Christ's suffering than a crucifixion by Tintoretto or Rubens, in the same way everything in the Zeus temple's sculptures—from the drapery of the slaves' clothes and the centaurs' grinning faces to the bearing and exalted calm of the heroes—speaks of a world ruled by living gods. To meet Apollo himself as a man in the flower of his youth among this throng, neither increases nor decreases one's reverence. Everything else in the Olympia museum pales before these sculptures and we were not particularly disappointed when the caretaker told us that the famous Praxitelean statue of Hermes was still buried since the war.

In the museum we met a very fat, very well-dressed and very sweaty young man from Patras. As we were the only visitors and were all staying at the railway hotel, we found ourselves in conversation with him and a woman who quite obviously was not his wife.

We began by asking if he had come by road as we had.

"No," he answered. "I may be a car dealer but I prefer to come to Olympia by train. It takes five hours, but at least I don't wreck a car."

After a short pause he suddenly put his hand on my shoulder and gave me a searching look.

"May I ask you a candid question? Well, I presume that like so many others you have come all the way to Greece to see Olympia, for example. I am here more by chance" (he threw a glance at his platinum-blond companion), "but thought I'd take a walk to the museum all the same. And I must say: all this is nothing but stones to me, just stones. What in heaven's name do you see in them?"

"Well, an art historian . . ." I said, trying to begin a short lecture, but the car dealer immediately cut me short.

"Oh, I see, art's your job, that explains it. I just couldn't understand how anyone could come to Greece for pleasure."

And easy in his mind he went back to the hotel with his chosen one.

We never found out why the only inhabitable hotel in Olympia, a sanatorium-like building from the 1890s with a view over the valley of the River Kladeos, was called "Railway Hotel," a name not exactly inviting to northern ears. There was no sign of any railway or station—they were evidently some distance away—and I began to suspect that the name had been chosen to give an impression of continental modernity which the hotel did in fact fulfill up to a point. We were given a freshly painted and very large room, where we slept our siesta during the worst heat of the day. Even in ancient times Olympia was notorious as one of the hottest places in Greece, and the Games, which took place at the end of August, must have been an ordeal for both competitors and spectators. We made use of the evening instead for another walk to the ruins, to which we also returned next morning at dawn. This morning, with

cool mists from the river, joyous bird song and long shadows cast by the trees over the pine needles on the ground, gave us our best memory of Olympia.

The return trip to Patras was easier than we had feared. During the blazing heat of noonday motorcycling is actually the coolest thing you can do short of having a bath. For the worst bit of the road Mona was able to ride in a truck taking melons to Athens. When we had passed the drifting sand and reached the coast where the asphalt began we thanked the truck driver, who gallantly presented Mona with a huge melon. We stopped at the first deserted beach to wash the dust off us and after our bath we lunched off the melon. We could certainly do with a short rest before going on to face the troubles awaiting us at Patras.

I shall be brief concerning these and say that *Daphne's* engine still lay resolved into its component parts at the workshop when we returned. The mechanic was just incapable of putting them together again and I had to spend an entire day helping him before the engine began to look like an engine again. By no means the least galling thing about the whole business was that before I was allowed to move the engine back via the customs scales and the caterpillar-crane, I had to fork out a sum equivalent to the price of the famous Paris gown belonging to the café singer, who was still caterwauling just as yearningly. It was a tense moment when we could at last test out the enigmatic engine. It went, and I know now—after a similar mishap that was quickly put right by a competent mechanic on Elba—that the only thing wrong with the engine was insufficient compression in the cylinders. A few drops of oil in the right spot would have saved us the whole nightmare at Patras and above all spared us the worries that beset us over and over again during the summer. From now on we could never rely on the engine, sometimes it went, sometimes it did not, the batteries gave out for no

reason, the cooling water got into the cylinders and there was no end to our troubles.

The engine failed for the first time only ten hours after our longed-for start from Patras. We had sailed all night in a head wind with young Panayotis Zavala as guest on board and were going to put him ashore at Ayion, twenty-five nautical miles east of Patras, when the engine refused to start. For the first time in all our voyages we made the bitter decision to turn back. In the strong following wind it took us only four hours to regain the odious jetty at Patras, where "the most skillful mechanic in Greece" soon came on board with an electrician who changed one or two cables around and took away our exhausted batteries for recharging. In the evening Cleopatra also came down, delighted to see us again. She explained soothingly:

"Now that you have once returned in the boat St. Andrew's Well has had its effect. You see, the saying is that whoever drinks from it *will come back* to Patras, not that you can never leave the town. We've all drunk from it and I've already made several trips—to Corinth among other places."

That put a different complexion on things! We had misunderstood the spell and obviously been barking up the wrong tree.

"Anyway, it's all superstition," Cleopatra went on. "Even the priest says so. I bet you that nothing will happen if you drink the water again."

We thought so too. But for some reason we never went back to St. Andrew's Well.

## APOLLO'S BREATH

ON OUR LAST day in Patras there was a sensation. A large white-painted cutter was borne in on an occasional puff of wind through the east entrance of the harbor. It carried the Union Jack and on the stern was the name *Korby*. Such an event would have been quite normal in a French or Italian port and would have aroused at the most a lame curiosity on board *Daphne*. Here in Greece, where yachts are few, both the Englishman and ourselves reacted just as positively to a meeting with a colleague. *Korby* tied up at the pier not far from us and shortly afterward the owner, Henry Denham, came along to see us. During the war he had been British naval attaché in Stockholm and in rather broken Swedish he enthused about his sailing trips in northern waters. We paid a pleasant visit to *Korby*, and were given valuable advice for the voyage ahead, as the Denhams were westward bound after having been to the northern Cyclades, Athens and Corinth. It certainly gave us pause when they told us of their tussle with the meltemia, the Aegean Sea's ill-famed north wind, which had blown so hard that after a few days *Korby* had abandoned all plans to sail to Santorin and instead had returned as quickly as possible via the Corinth Canal to the calmer western seas. *Daphne* was only half as big as *Korby* and August was approaching, the worst meltemia month according to the statistical tables in our nautical handbook. If all this was off-putting, their enthusiastic descriptions of the Cyclades' harbors, population and scenery made the adventure doubly alluring. Statistics are one thing, luck another, we reasoned. Why should it not be an unusual year, an August with comparatively little meltemia?



Korby was on her way to Sardinia, Mallorca and Ibiza, where we had been the previous summer, so we were able to repay all the advice we had received with considerably more factual information than a warning about St. Andrew's Well in Patras. Late that afternoon we got our batteries back on board. After a final settlement with "the most skillful mechanic in Greece" we cast off from the painfully familiar quay with indescribable relief. Our notion of the trifling value of statistical weather forecasts for sailing was unpleasantly confirmed the same evening. According to figures based on daily observations over a period of forty years, the chances of a following wind in the Gulf of Corinth when sailing east in the month of July are about 85 per cent. Alas, if you get your arm shot away in war it is poor consolation to be told that such a misfortune only happens to about every twenty-thousandth soldier. While we battled on against wind and current through the straits between the two fortresses of Rion and Andirion, which formerly barred the entrance to the Bay of Lepanto, I had plenty of time to ponder both on Cervantes, who lost his arm here at the famous naval battle, and on the relation of statistics to the individual.

Few things illustrate more clearly man's illusions regarding the scientific point of view than the calculus of probabilities. To whom is it of interest and from what angle is it binding? Answer: to the outsider. The relatively low percentage of airplane crashes is a guarantee not for the traveler but for the insurance company. It is all the same to the fisherman, but not to the fish, which individual fish are caught. The very fact that we ourselves make up a part of the calculus instead of being merely calculators, the very fact that it concerns us personally, deprives scientific objectivity of all value: it has no bearing on the human plane—where it always concerns us personally, where we are primarily travelers and individuals. It is no paradox to say that the same person who lightheartedly goes up in an airplane optimistically buys a ticket in a lottery. Everything decisive, if it happens once only, is, as a risk or a chance,

infinitely great, independent of all objective probability. Every faith with only the barest possibility of truth is therefore logically unsailable. If this reasoning is right, then all the familiar attempts to prove God's existence, for example, are unnecessary; it is enough that the reverse cannot be proved.

While my thoughts were bearing me in full sail like this from nautical tables to Pascal and Kierkegaard, *Daphne* was heading east much more laboriously through a choppy sea. At sunset we were tired of the boat's pitching and decided to go in to a deserted bay at the island of Trizona. It was already so dark when we anchored that the bare rocky shore was only just visible all around us like a wall, and next morning we started in the gray dawn without having seen much more of this island, which therefore remained no more than a shadowy haven for us.

This second day, too, the wind blew contrary to all statistics. We were now in the middle of the long Gulf of Corinth, which just here is rather like a gigantic moat. The wind only reached the surface of the water in gusts and the waves, tossed back from the cliffs, formed a crisscross, static and suddenly redoubled undulation. The mountains towered to the skies on both sides of the water, *Daphne* was flung to and fro, the sails gave but little support and before long we were seized by a feeling of impotence and littleness such as we had never felt on the open sea. In ancient as in modern times there were two ways of approaching the Delphic Apollo: either across the mountains from the mainland or by boat across the water. It no doubt makes a mighty impression on the pilgrim by land as well, but I can hardly imagine a better preparation for a meeting with the god than the one forced on us: to fight all day long amid the salt spray beneath bellying sails, lost and almost invisible in this desolate landscape that is fashioned on a godlike scale. Everything here was unchanged since the day the pointed sail of Agamemnon's ship glistened like a beetle's wing on the dark-blue water, when he came to consult the oracle about his expedition against Troy. We

too were filled with veneration mixed with fear as we reached the Bay of Salona's western cape and all at once saw Parnassus lying in front of us, Apollo's majestic mountain with light wreaths of cloud half-way up among the dazzling precipices where Delphi lies.

We tacked in toward the head of the bay, past a series of bleak rocky islets with small white saint's chapels and past the little town of Galaxidi, whose abrupt cluster of bright house-cubes between the desolate sea and the equally virgin mountains had the appearance of a mineral crystallization phenomenon. The whole of this coast, with its burned-up and sterile purity, has a great, but at the same time inhuman, beauty. As so often in Greece, it was much more windy the nearer we got to the lee shore. But we were rid of the cross-sea and soon *Daphne*, heeling right over and with bow wave hissing, was carving her quickly obliterated wake beneath the steep spurs of Parnassus. We furled our sails with difficulty off Itea's little jetty, not so far from the spot where the lightweight ships of the ancients were pulled up on the sand while the crews made their pilgrimage to the oracle.

Itea, which is a peaceful little town with barely two thousand inhabitants, has no real harbor, only a short jetty which sticks straight out from the shore. Having dropped anchor, we found it was no easy matter backing into the quay in the strong wind, in spite of our engine, and there was a tense moment or two before some of the local people hurried up to help. By degrees half the town assembled on the quay and their interest was soon so great that those standing on the edge were nearly pushed into the water by those behind. The Greeks themselves admit that they are an inquisitive people and in this connection readily quote their ancestor Odysseus, who did not even check his passion for discovery before the gates of the realm of death. But the modern Greek curiosity seemed, to us at least, to be a sign of lack of tradition rather than the reverse. While in Spain pride, in France vanity and in Italy a surfeit of every kind of sensation restrain people from

showing their natural curiosity quite as openly, the Greeks are curious in the same ingenuous and unashamed way as children. In every port, in every place where we appeared with the *Lambretta*, an impenetrable ring of spectators closed around us instantly. The shyest ones merely stood staring hour after hour; the more daring—despite all language difficulties—started asking questions by signs and gestures: how much does a boat or a motorcycle like that cost?; and the really brazen ones did not stop at touching and poking the weird inhabitants of Mars and their means of conveyance. Experience soon taught us that the only way of avoiding this inquisitiveness was to satisfy it quickly and thoroughly.

Here in Itea, a youth whose stumbling efforts at English inspired him with a veritable sense of ownership toward us instantly hopped on board like an old friend. I appointed him interpreter and gave a little talk then and there to the assembled population, telling them who we were, where we came from, the purpose of our call—to visit Delphi—the boat's tonnage, age and approximate price, the number of cylinders in the engine, its horsepower and how much fuel it used. Was there anything more they wanted to know? Our interpreter turned to the crowd and one or two women raised their voices. He translated:

“They ask if you have any children?”

When this important question had also been disposed of the Itea people dispersed quite satisfied, and from then on we could enjoy comparative obscurity instead of being besieged day and night by inquisitive people. The name of our self-elected friend and interpreter was Papadimas and he turned out to be a very nice young man. He worked in his father's engineering workshop but confided to us that he wanted to be an officer. The war had evidently been a great adventure for him and his constant descriptions of fights, machine guns, hand grenades and strategy were due not only to the fact that he had heard practically nothing else spoken of since his childhood, but also that the war had made him aware of himself

and filled his existence with a deeper meaning than the egoistic ambitions of everyday life. It is true that war is shattering for all who cannot believe in it, for those who are not convinced—or do not reach conviction beyond the absurdity—of its justification, but in a country like Greece, where the struggle was forced on them from the start and the cause indisputably just, one meets a surprising number of young men for whom the arduous years have been the best of schools. Earnest but not melancholy, warmly patriotic but not chauvinistic, ready to sacrifice but devoid of all fanaticism, soldiers by nature and therefore free of every need to intoxicate themselves with parades, military music and uniforms, robust and patient, not because of primitive racial qualities but in conjunction with a marked moral sense—such are the young men of Greece after ten years of war. I will not deny that a meeting with a few platoons of conscripts outside Itea, far from filling us with the disgust usually evoked by soldiers in peacetime as the incarnation of both the race's and their own private stupidity, was, on the contrary, a moving experience: their equipment was so wretched, their bearing so proud and the country around them so barren in its greatness—the country whose freedom it had cost so much blood to save.

*Daphne* had been spared the cross-sea out in the Gulf of Corinth, but something almost worse awaited us at Itea. Toward evening one loud-speaker after the other blared out from the cafés along the promenade, not western song hits but those doleful oriental tunes which are such an eloquent witness to the fact that it is little more than a hundred years since the Turks ruled the land. A forty-man brass band soon added its tonal hurricane to the acoustic storm; there was general dancing and merry-making which we decided to join, as it was impossible anyway to get any peace on the boat. We sat at a café table with our friend Papadimas and his parents, who insisted on standing us supper with the national wine, whose resinous taste we were beginning to get used to. A Frenchman no doubt maintains to the end his hostile attitude to Greek wine, which the

*Guide Bleu* crushingly condemns as barbaric and undrinkable—even though the custom of flavoring wine with resin is most likely an inheritance from the old Greeks. After a month, we for our part preferred this wine to the unresinous kind, which is obtainable at the more expensive restaurants or on the islands. In fact, now that our journey is over, a bottle of resin wine which we brought home with us and have relished drop by drop in brandy glasses during the dark winter evenings, has almost become an elixir of life to us, but this is due rather to association than to taste. Just as Proust found the way back to his lost childhood by way of his famous biscuit, the pungent smell and taste of resin wine opens the gates for every friend of Greece to the bare and sun-drenched land where he first tasted it. We are back again in the restaurant in the shadow of the Acropolis or listening to the bees humming in the amphitheater at Epidaurus; we are sitting once more in the warm evening at the café table in Itéa, while the noise of the sea blends with the strident music and our friend Papadimas points out human destinies among the dancers.

There is the town's war hero, a handsome officer in mufti with a classic profile, the cynosure of all admiring eyes. There is the town's richest man, the king of the Salona Valley olive exporters, who got married a week ago and is madly in love with his pretty wife. There is this one and that one, a whole little community with their small joys and large miseries, their humdrum everyday life and their need of gaiety once in a while. To begin with they dance ordinary European dances, but suddenly the ice is broken. Elderly men and women get up and, with expressions that are rather self-conscious at first but soon grow radiant, take the lead when the complicated figures of the national dances begin, dances which are not at all unlike those we saw in Sardinia and which, like these, may be a survival from ancient times. When we asked if such merrymaking was usual in Itéa, Papadimas's father, who had once emigrated to America, answered:

"Not really, but it has become so of recent times. A year ago the partisans were still drinking *ouzo* here at the café tables and the machine guns were rattling. There may be a new war soon, we may as well enjoy the peace while we can."

Sympathetic, but unfortunately not deaf, we lay awake in our bunks for the rest of the night until at last, about half-past four, the music stopped. You need to be young and in Greece to crawl out an hour later when the alarm clock goes off at dawn, fresh as a daisy and eager to face a world as ancient as it is new born.

Among the delights our *Lambretta* afforded us this summer the morning ride up to Delphi was by far one of the greatest. The first part of the road had been completely churned up by armored columns during the war and was so embedded in the dense olive groves of the Salona Valley that we saw nothing of the landscape. By degrees, however, the airy silhouette of Parnassus was outlined against the morning sun behind the silver-gray foliage of the trees, the road mounted, and we passed villages where vegetables were being sold in the street and women were standing by glistening fountains. After one or two hairpin bends we suddenly found ourselves up on the first bare ridge, with the olive woods below us like a surging sea. The country now grew more and more desolate but the road, on the other hand, better—the heaviest armored columns had evidently not lumbered up so far—and soon we were skimming along an excellent asphalt road, as effortlessly as though we had *Hermes'* wings and with a view across the valley, the Gulf of Corinth and the mountains on the other side of the water which widened until it became as extensive as the god's: we were in Delphi.

You come first to modern Delphi, or *Kastri* as the village is called, a Greek mountain village which, despite its unusual origin, was not unlike the other places we had passed earlier in the morning. *Kastri* was built shortly before the turn of the century at the expense of the French government in order to house the population from the village beneath which the ancient temple area was buried. The old

Delphi, which French archeologists have restored to the world, is right beside Kastri, but on another slope, so that you cannot see one place from the other. There is a bend in the road, present-day Greece disappears and there lies Ancient Greece, a sight which, together with the Acropolis in Athens, is the most moving that awaits the traveler in this land. Here, in singular purity, is the meeting of the chief elements of what we have learned to regard as the typical Greek countryside: mountains, a view of the sea, temples and pastoral solitude. Even on the hottest summer's day, the spring of Castalia, cool and abundant, pours out at the foot of dazzling precipices from which the light, as from a giant reflector, is diffused over the parched scene of the sun god's cult. Far down in the valley the olive woods flow toward the sea like a congealed river, donkeys struggle along the paths under immense bundles of twigs, sheep browse on the spectators' benches of the Stadium, and eagles wheel in the air on outstretched, motionless wings. It is an experience which pierces through all the outer layers of the soul where aesthetic enjoyment, tourist sensations and intellectual speculations belong, to the core of purity and contact with the divine which even the degenerate "civilized man" of today hides within him.

Archeology is a science with a reputation of being fascinating for its devotees but rather dull for the public. There is no comparison between penetrating Tutankhamen's sealed tomb and gazing at his treasure in a museum, or between unearthing the foot of a god with a spade and then seeing him as an ordinary Roman copy after the discovery. Faced with the finished result, with excavated temple bases, foundations of houses, monument pedestals, in short the whole jumble of stone slabs which most ruins consist of, with here and there a bit of wall or column sticking up, the tourist is apt to feel like our car dealer at Olympia: it's all just a lot of stones to him, nothing but dead stones. What actually is left when the excitement of treasure hunting is gone and you have not even the



scientific ambition to explain or prove anything? Not any aesthetic pleasure, for ruins usually have the appearance of a littered building site. Not the thirst for knowledge either, for the pure facts can be got far better from books and treatises. In reality, the great and incomparable charm of an archeological walk is due to a single factor: our irrational but unshakable belief in the association of matter. It makes no difference how often common sense tells us that a face which has leaned over a mirror leaves no trace and that even the man who carves his name in a block of marble is gone beyond recall when he dies. Inside us there is a magic conviction that everything which has happened in a place lingers there in some form or other and that extraordinary, sacred or horrible things especially hide like spirits in the material that once embodied them. A knife with which a murder has been committed is no longer the same knife to us, the battlefields where the dice of world history have been thrown can never be ordinary fields again and no god from a vanished civilization is so dead that he does not live on in his ruined temple. An archeological walk is therefore essentially a walk among dumb but unforgetting witnesses, and we touch the sun-warmed blocks of stone with the feeling that there, under the hard but thin surface, all secrets have taken refuge and we can almost reach them with our fingers.

We left our motorcycle in the shade of the tall trees that are watered by the Castalian spring and started to explore Delphi from the Marmaria temple area at the extreme east. From terrace to terrace and wall to wall we slowly approached the holy of holies: Apollo's temple and the sibyl's rock. The temple consisted of six columns on a broken foundation and the rock was an ordinary gray boulder such as you will see in any Finnish forest. But were not the gods themselves appearing in a deceptively commonplace guise? Here, as so often in life, it was necessary to see through the meaningless disguise, to divine, listen and understand. At sunset

we climbed up to the Stadium, whose dizzy position and pure, simple form make it unquestionably the world's most beautiful sports ground.

We had thought of returning to Itea and *Daphne* overnight—it was only twelve miles by road and the hotels in Greece are wickedly dear—but we were so tempted to see the full moon at Delphi and from the benches of the ancient amphitheater to watch the sun rise next morning across the Pleistus valley, that when evening came we knocked rather timidly at the door of the Pythian Apollo's own inn at Kastri. We were lucky: this world-famous hotel, largely destroyed during the war, had reopened two days before, having been thoroughly renovated, and the tariff was within the reach even of mere mortals.

Three days at Delphi is not long, but it is time enough to leave a lifelong impression and to study the ruins and museum fairly thoroughly. The latter was only half reinstalled after the war; many of the treasures still lay buried outside the museum building, others, including the glorious reliefs of the Siphnian treasury, had just been dug out and bore signs of irreparable damage from a renewed contact with damp earth. The main piece, the famous driver in bronze, had been taken to Athens, where we later found it in the National Museum. Despite the gaps, the Delphi Museum was unforgettable. The excavations at Delphi have brought to light unusually rich finds of sculpture from archaic times, by far the best and most vigorous period in the development of Greek art. The deepest impression perhaps is made by the Naxians' winged sphinx with a virgin's head; it puts the same riddle to the modern museum visitor as its relation once put to Oedipus—the riddle whose answer is man. The Theseus suite, too, is fascinating; the hero bends just as smilingly over his future wife, the captured Amazon queen Antiope, as over the terrible bull he is fighting—beyond the reach of all mental suffering and emotion, deeply rooted in the serene world of the gods and heroes. The most curious but ugliest piece in the museum is the

omphalos, the navel of the world, which was to show that Delphi was the center of the earth, the point at which it was once united with the cosmos.

Delphi has never had any significance or function other than its oracle. This existed even before the Cretan Apollon Delphinios, worshiped in the shape of a dolphin, became lord of the place and gave it its name. As long as the oracle officiated, Delphi was a cult center for all the Hellene world, but when the sibyl at last fell silent in 381 A.D. by the decree of Theodosius, the place sank back to what it had originally been: a poor and inaccessible mountain valley off the beaten track. Archeologically this has been of value: while in Athens the ancient buildings had to supply material for the Byzantine city or were devoured by the Turks' hungry limekilns, while in Delos the whole of the Cycladian island world for more than a thousand years had a convenient marble quarry with the sea as a ready means of transport, the blocks of stone at Delphi have admittedly been jumbled together by earthquakes and the attempts of the poor village inhabitants to combine the available building blocks into new entities, but very little has vanished without a trace. In other words, Delphi is a gigantic jigsaw puzzle where the archeologists have already managed to put together an impressive number of pieces. The Athenians' Treasury, which was completely obliterated, has risen almost intact since 1906 with its hundreds of blocks of stone, all of which had only one possible position in the whole, and Marmaria's round temple, a stone ring on the ground to visitors at the beginning of the 1930s, now boasts both columns and cornice. Six columns have also risen on the formerly level stylobate of the Apollo Temple, even if it has not been possible to restore the holy of holies, the room where the sibyl, dazed by vapors from the bowels of the earth, sat on her tripod and spoke her enigmatic answers.

We were lucky in making the acquaintance of one of the puzzle-solvers, the likable French archeologist Amandry, who was spending his summer holidays trying to restore the ramp leading up to the

Apollo Temple. He would walk thoughtfully around the entire ruins with a measuring stick in his hand, assuring us that he had memorized several thousand ashlar. The same morning we met him he had at last found, about three hundred yards from the temple, a block of stone which had long been missing, and he was so pleased that he asked us to dinner at the archeologists' villa.

It was a very nice evening, and we talked of everything; of war, which for thousands of years has given the archeologists so much but is now threatening to take back all it has given; of the part Delphi has played as a meeting place for the art schools of ancient times; and not least of the oracle as a religious institution. One of those present, a white-bearded Russian architect, the archeologists' technical adviser, had a lot on his mind concerning this last question.

"Our modern age," he explained, "cannot grasp what the oracle of Apollo was, because oracles and prophecies for us have acquired an entirely different meaning. Our prophecies express a kind of ennui, or at any rate a striving to escape existence. We wish to avoid being chained to the present moment and to peep into the works in order to free ourselves from the blind, inflexible force of circumstance. A modern prophecy may be defined as the future regarded as history: 'You will meet a dark lady, your life will be stormy but short, I see money and a journey.' The oracle of the ancients was something else. They came to Delphi with a problem, a choice they had to make: 'Shall I slay my guilty mother or leave my father un-avenged? Shall I sail my ships to Troy?' Or simply: 'Shall I marry?' It wasn't an obscure 'vision of the future' they were looking for, a suspension of the necessity of will and struggle, but the god's sanction, the advice of one who had a clearer view of all relevant factors. Having got their answer they went to action, primed with confidence, strengthened in their will, not freed from it."

One of the others objected that Oedipus at any rate—or rather his father—far from being advised by the oracle, was given a cate-

gorical prophecy.

"That's true," the Russian admitted, "but what better instance could you have that the oracle did not absolve men from decision and responsibility? Oedipus' father resists, he gets rid of his son in order to nullify the prophecy—thereby involuntarily making its fulfillment possible. The modern Oedipus would have been kept at home instead—to murder his father when the time came and have an affair with his mother, because science, our present-day oracle, has put it into his head that he has an Oedipus complex. And best of all: both he himself and the forensic medicine experts would consider him unanswerable for his actions—he is provably under coercion. But the real Oedipus gouged out his eyes, to him the fact that everything was predestined was no extenuating circumstance."

The Russian paused, and as no one said anything he went on:

"It's strange that there has always been this discussion as to whether free will exists or whether everything is predestined. Even Homer knew that both alternatives are equally correct: that everything is predestined by the gods—the natural laws, statistics, whatever you like—but that certain forces are active in and through our consciousness. Man is free, because freedom is the core of destiny."

The worthy architect went on for a long time with his explanations, he drew parallels with Luther's views on predestination, with Dostoevsky and Berdiaieff. We others let him talk. From the terrace where we were sitting we could see out over the ruins, which were bathed in moonlight. The crickets were silent and a celestial coolness floated down from Parnassus after the heat of the day. Perhaps the old man was right? I had a vague feeling that many vital questions, many of the problems with which we are always beset, were easier to solve here at Delphi than elsewhere. Perhaps Apollo's power to show the best choice, to give confidence and spur the will, had not entirely ceased? Perhaps a journey to his oracle is still something more than an impulse of cultural curiosity?

Delphi is known for its recurrent earthquakes, its terrible thunderstorms and its icy winter climate. The solidly built houses and the peasants' thick frieze clothes were also a sign that the place is not always as idyllic as during the three summer days we were there. Now the element of menace and sublimity only intensified the beauty, just as the cool mountain wind only made the air fresher and easier to breathe. The joy of those Delphi mornings, which greeted us as we threw open the window shutters of our hotel room and looked out on to the mountains and the valley, still full of the night's shadows, but with Itea and Galaxidi dazzling white in the sunshine far away on the blue gulf of Corinth! Two such mornings we were the Sun God's guests, but then our anxiety for *Daphne* and our ebbing funds obtruded themselves. As we had left Itea with the intention of returning the same evening we had only asked Papadimas to keep half an eye on *Daphne*, and as for money, when we paid our hotel bill for the two nights we had not even enough left for a stamp. Luckily the Lambretta's gas tank was still fairly full, and we decided to take a run along the Athens road up into the mountains before returning to Itea. We set off on the newly laid asphalt road across stony ravines, past winding donkey tracks and steeply sloping fields where the earth gleamed red through the scanty stubble. The scenery increased in wildness and grandeur the higher we climbed toward the pass, where a church cupola and a large village were soon outlined against the sky. I had a strong feeling that this way of traveling through the centuries-old landscape could be compared only with Homer's account of Hermes' flights on winged feet as he bore his tidings above the toiling world of man. Through modern science man's dreams come true and a mere tourist can feel himself the equal of the gods.

The village at the pass was called Arachova and had been badly damaged in the partisan fighting the year before, but in almost every house we could see, through the half-open doors, peasant women busily weaving the loveliest imaginable cloth, which is the

big export article of the village. The menfolk were sitting in the cafés talking, and we could hardly turn around in the square for all the inquisitive men who asked what the Lambretta cost and if we were married. We left Arachova behind us with a sigh of relief and sped back down into the valley.

We had thought of going straight down to Itea, but just before Delphi we discovered one or two ancient tombs in a field and left the Lambretta in the shade of a fig tree to take a closer look at them. Plunderers had of course long since violated the sarcophagi, which lay wide open and empty in the sunlight, but in this lonely spot they nevertheless seemed filled to the brim with the mystery which always clings to the gates of death, the gates through which men vanish into invisibility. There were other tombs farther away; we followed a stony path and after walking for some time in the sweltering noonday heat we caught sight of a shady grove of trees. There must be a stream there, we reasoned, and went nearer. The sight that met us when we reached the steep rock above the grove, however, enchanted and amazed us. A glittering, crystal-clear stream flowed along under the rock and ran down through a walled channel into a large, square basin, shaded by tall trees. Around the basin peasant girls were kneeling washing clothes, but the materials spread out in the sun were not ordinary factory-made ones but thick woolen coverlets, homespun skirts, rugs and rags in the most harmonious colors. Pack donkeys were standing tethered under the trees and an old man was untying more gaily colored bundles: all the winter woolens of a large farm were evidently being washed. Beyond the basin was a whirring and splashing noise and we found that the water went on down through a thick perpendicular pipe to a small mill on the next shelf. Here, too, donkeys were tethered under the trees and the old miller, covered with white flour dust, was peering out through a hole in the wall.

They all seemed pleased to see us and were delighted when I took out my camera. Whereas in Italy, and especially in France, it

is regarded as an indiscretion to photograph people at their work, and you are often jeered at if you take a picture without first giving people time to comb their hair, put on their snapshot smile and preferably change into their Sunday best, which is considered to represent their real self, in Greece people show a spontaneous delight in being immortalized just as they are. Is this due to a more genuine, more simple attitude to life, a solidarity with the real, instead of the imagined, personality? The Greek often gives the impression that he is naive and lacks the ability to laugh at himself, obviously because he has a disconcertingly harmonious character, a kind of simplicity which does not exclude a generous dash of guile and calculation. The Greek sense of humor is, as a result of this, strongly objective and based on the comedy of situation. We found ourselves playing the leading parts in a farce which was obviously the funniest thing that had happened in Delphi all that year.

It was a very hot day and the temptation to take a dip in the water was suddenly too much for me. The girls seemed quite taken up by their washing and several large boulders nearest the stream screened me from view. Luckily I kept my underpants on, for I had hardly got down into the water before everyone gathered wide-eyed around the crazy foreigner. And it was certainly a funny sight. If I clung to the stone edge of the channel the strong current threatened every second to pull off my pants, which the water distended like a balloon, and if I clutched at them I was in danger of being swept away myself. Soon the girls were splitting their sides with laughter and the miller, who had been drawn to the scene, let fire what must have been the juiciest remarks. Only my wife's intervention averted a catastrophe and I could then continue my bath in peace.

Cold, fresh, crystal-clear water: only those who have known drought and heat in a land where the sunshine feels like a physical weight, a rain of molten gold in which you walk hunched up, more eagerly on the lookout for shelter than in the heaviest downpour, only those who have known the southern summer can understand



what water is. For us, coming from a land where water is really only appreciated when it reflects the blue sky in a gleaming lake, a land where water is enemy rather than friend and even as a drink has to be disguised in various forms, from tea, beer and grogs to the repulsive fizzy drinks of the aerated water factories, for us our stay in Greece was a complete re-education, a gradual discovery that water is not only the best and most natural of drinks, but that its taste has greater variations than all the artificial soft drinks put together. We learned that people can walk for miles to some special spring for a pitcher of water to offer an honored guest, and we watched this guest in astonishment as he sipped the water with the concentrated air of a connoisseur, raising his eyes the next moment with a far more blissful smile than that of any wine-taster: "This reminds me of a water I drank two years ago from a little spring near Sparta" or, if you want to be really polite, "This must be water from Castalia itself": the spring of Castalia at Delphi is just as famous in present-day Greece for its unsurpassed drinking water as it was in ancient times as the fount of poesy. The glass of water served as part of every order in all cafés has such significance that certain café proprietors keep three or four different waters to suit customers' tastes. But the best water is always to be had at the actual source, for all transport changes the taste and temperature. Water, springs, streams in the dry Greek summer: no wonder they were formerly personified as nymphs and the purest and most luxuriant of them carried off as captives to the green gardens in the valleys, to the naked youths in the stadiums and to the temple-like wells full of cool rippling and the girlish voices of the water carriers.

The swim I had in the millstream at Delphi was something more to me than a cooling dip. Reborn, dripping with quickly drying beads of water, I rose out of the nymph's cold embrace, bound to this soil with the devotion, the primitive roots, made possible only by physical union.

We then spent one or two gay and carefree hours together with

these country people. None of them could speak anything but Greek and our conversation was therefore a cross between the well-known party game where one side tries to act something which the other side has to guess, and an expressionistic use of our limited Greek vocabulary. Most educated people know much more Greek than they think. If you break up words like airplane, phosphor, necropolis, chronometer, graphologist, hydrography and philosopher, you already have several good cornerstones, and even if we did not talk to the laundresses and the miller's family about somatic paralysis, anthroposophical therapy, cacophonous music, sclerotic choreographers, paralytic athletes, kleptomaniac architects or melancholy crypto-Nazis, this common vocabulary did come in very useful. Helios, Python, Thalatta, Cosmos and Selene were of great help; particles like mono-, neo-, poly-, micro-, macro-, and ana- came readily to the tongue; oddities such as the fact that symphony means agreement and that in a restaurant you ask for the logarithms instead of the bill, we had already learnt in Patras; and our daily needs had already taught us that water, wine, road, tomorrow, beautiful, thank you and good night are in modern Greek. We used this vocabulary in much the same way as when you write or interpret modern poetry. We let the whole represent the part or vice versa, we worked with daring similes and vague symbols. Our listeners, too, reacted like poetry readers: they understood nothing but divined all, often adding from their own experience or imagination, so that the story became quite different and perhaps better. But in some curious way we managed, in spite of everything, to relate our whole complicated story of *Daphne's* voyages, St. Andrew's Well, the Lambretta etc. In return we were given animated, but rather diffuse, descriptions of the war years, and we all agreed that Germans and Italians had been "poly kako" to the Greeks.

Our friends had a hamper with them and generously invited us to share it. It was not only because we had not a single drachma and had been starving since early morning that this meal tasted

divine. It *was* a meal for the gods: newly baked brown bread with salt olives as large as plums, goat cheese and tomatoes. Our drink we got from the spring and for dessert we picked figs from the trees. In order to try and repay the hospitality we handed round cigarettes, which were rather hesitantly accepted by all the men—Virginia cigarettes are not particularly liked in Greece. Half in jest we also offered the laundresses Lucky Strikes, and it aroused a storm of shouts and laughter when one of the girls boldly accepted. We thought at first that Mona's example had awakened a kind of emancipation tendency in her, but soon found out the real reason: the girl had a fiancé and wanted to surprise him with a little present.

We spent the whole afternoon in this way by the mill, spellbound by the place and the friendly people. The temptation to spend the night in the mountains after a supper on figs and water was strong, not so much because of the starry sky, for *Daphne's* hatchway enabled us to sleep all summer with the sky as our only roof, but the air was very much cooler here than in Itea. The thought of our deserted boat, however, induced us to make a move at dusk. When we rode out on to Itea's silent jetty on our humming horse about ten o'clock the moon was shining large and round in the glassy water and a well-known silhouette rose up from *Daphne's* deck. The excellent Papadimas had, "for safety's sake" carried his mattress down to the boat and slept on deck the two nights we were away—"not because there are thieves in Itea, but such a lot of strange fishing boats come here." Papadimas, if anyone, was worthy of being made one of the voyage's "knights of the *puukko*." After our experience the previous summer we had brought with us a little stock of these Finnish knives, as well as Swedish wooden Dala horses, to be awarded as mementos and thanks to deserving persons in the ports we visited. We had already given away several Dala horses but this was the first time we knew for certain that a knife was the most suitable. Before we sailed next morning Papadimas wrote in our guestbook: "In memmory of our friend ships and to remember my

in your old civilization country as soon as you return. Your friend forever Papadimas." To hear a Greek call Scandinavia an "old civilization country" may sound like irony, but was undoubtedly meant in all sincerity. Papadimas had seen and visited several Swedish boats that had put in to Ayion, and he often spoke about them enthusiastically. The Greeks, despite their great patriotism, are amazingly apt to rate foreign countries higher than their own in practically all respects other than valor in war, natural beauty and ancient monuments.

The Gulf of Corinth lay like a mirror in the morning light. Proud of our linguistic triumphs the day before we suggested to Papadimas that we call the dead calm "aerodynamic paralysis," but he explained that the right expression was *bonaccia*—the same word the fishermen in Italy use. Many nautical terms in modern Greek are Italian, a reminder of Venice's dominion over the country for so many hundred years. Boat is *barka*, keel *karina*, bow *prora*, captain *kapetanios*, cape *pounta*, etc. We had intended starting early in the morning but had to submit to waiting for the wind. Hour after hour went by, the sun rose toward the zenith and by noon Itea was a dead city with empty streets, shuttered houses and an atmosphere of eternity, which was not even dispelled by the last farmer riding along on his donkey and striving to reach the shelter of his house before man's time was quite over and Apollo's hours began. Then there was an almost imperceptible ripple on the water and we put out. Never has a waft of air reminded me so strongly of a breath as this light, warm breeze which time and again bellied our sails gently, causing us to glide farther and farther out between the cliffs toward the lazy, gold-glinting sea. Not even up in the god's own temple had we felt so near to him, so near an invisible face which, like the reflected sides of Parnassus, bent down over our little ship.

We lay under our awning all afternoon, almost in a state of coma from the blazing heat. Not until about six o'clock did a breeze spring up, unfortunately from the east. We made two long tacks,

but at sunset the wind died away again. By then we had got so far east that the isolated plateau of Acro-Corinthus' fortress began to emerge from the haze, while Parnassus had changed into a thin silhouette beyond our wake. The night was calm and moonlit, but a constant stream of ships kept passing on their way in and out of the Corinth Canal, so that we had to take turns keeping watch on deck. When not even the morning brought any wind, our patience gave out and we started the engine. After an hour and a half we reached the little port of Poseidonia, where the Corinth Canal begins. Both modern Corinth and the ancient city are somewhat to the south on the coast. We could study them in the glasses as we glided past, but neither of them has a reliable harbor and we had to leave *Daphne* in a safe place while we made our planned trip to Mycenae and Tiryns. On the chart Poseidonia looked to be what we were looking for, but when we steered in between the crescent-shaped arms of the pier we were rather disappointed. The place was sheltered, true enough, but completely uninhabited except for a little galvanized iron shed where there was a canal guard all by himself. Not a quay, not a road, not a house within sight. Before us lay the canal, straight as an arrow, endless and like a giant ditch with perpendicular orange-colored walls of sand and rock. In the far distance was a small boat, which slowly came nearer. It was a caïque, and when it had passed the watchman hoisted a blue flag on his mast and waved us on. Just as well! It is much safer to have the Corinth Canal behind than ahead, as the slightest wrong maneuver by any large-sized boat causes severe landslides and closing of the canal indefinitely. The port at the other end was perhaps better than Poseidonia.

The Corinth Canal is nearly four miles long and in places over a hundred yards deep from ground level. The excellent strategic and commercial position of this inner passage between the Aegean and Ionian Seas makes it easy to understand that even during Athens' age of greatness a canal was thought of through the Isthmus

of Corinth. The Romans, however, were the first really to do anything about it, and the work would certainly have been finished if the political situation had not changed. As it was, the ancient method of dragging the smaller ships overland with the help of oxen had to suffice all through the Middle Ages and up to the beginning of modern times. Not until the 1880s was the Romans' work completed, and since then a large part of shipping to and from Greece passes through this canal. The last war showed that it was not a piece of work to last forever, as a few German dynamite charges caused the brittle walls to collapse so thoroughly that the canal was closed until quite recently and in parts had to be dug out from the bottom.

There are no locks, so that the current can be very strong when the wind presses water into the bays on either side. We had the current against us and it took us nearly an hour to get through. There are two permanent bridges, one for the railway and one for the road; both are guarded by soldiers, but otherwise we saw not a living soul, only the sky and the high, ribbed earth walls. There is something special about a trip along a canal or a river, about this paradoxical meeting between two elements which otherwise only meet with a wide margin: the coast, the shore. We thought of our earlier trips, how we had glided along between trees and meadows on the narrow canals through France and passed two tunnels before reaching the Mediterranean. We again breathed the smell of earth and heard our engine echo between steep walls, our curiosity was again concentrated on what was to meet us *on the other side*.

The surprise was not long in coming: at the same moment as we emerged from the canal at Isthmia we found ourselves somewhere in Sweden. A neat, white-painted steamer was unloading timber at a typical Scandinavian wooden jetty and a house in 18th century Swedish style was reflected in the water. *Dalsland* was painted in large letters on the ship's bows, and the Swedish flag floated idly from the stern in the summer breeze. Obviously our arrival and flag

caused just as much surprise on board the *Dalsland*: we had hardly dropped anchor in the small but well-sheltered harbor basin before an invitation to lunch was shouted to us through the megaphone.

Isthmia appeared to be exactly the spot we were looking for. *Daphne* was moored beneath the kind harbor master's window, and we could feel happy about her even if we were away for several days. The Lambretta was lifted ashore, and the slight gloom caused by the iniquitous toll to the canal company was dispelled during lunch on board the *Dalsland*. In the afternoon Captain Lindahl and his sixteen-year-old daughter Jussie—on her first trip abroad—came over to *Daphne* for a swim and to look at our ship. We had just put the dinghy in the water and as it had been on the after-deck ever since our Ithaca visit it started to leak. On the way from the *Dalsland* to *Daphne* all went well thanks to constant bailing, but when I rowed the captain back in the evening the *Dalsland's* crew, who were mustered along the railing, had the rare pleasure of seeing our little nutshell vanish inexorably beneath their commander's somewhat corpulent figure and the trip home end up as a swim. All honor to Captain Lindahl for continuing to smile in the face of disaster and even ask us to a farewell dinner. The *Dalsland's* cargo was unloaded and the ship went on the same evening through the Corinth Canal. We turned in early, as new and great adventures were awaiting us next day.

## AGAMEMNON'S KINGDOM

IT WAS ONLY half-past five in the morning and the sun was contending with the dawn-haze over the Bay of Salamis as we left *Daphne* looking at her reflection in the halcyon sea. But in the low pine wood near Isthmia the birds were singing with such northern clarity and the shadows of the tree trunks across the needles on the ground were so familiar that it was only the stronger, more perfumed scent of resin and a little saint's chapel half hidden among the pines which reminded us that we were not riding along a sandy road at home in Scandinavia. It is not easy to grasp that Isthmia is one of the famed places of history, the rival of Olympia as a sacred part and a meeting place for all the athletes of Greece. If you did not know it, you could never guess that these wooded hills and ridges conceal temples, theaters and an ancient stadium. The previous evening I had been dipping into Plutarch to revive half-forgotten memories and had chanced to read about the great day at the Isthmian Games in 196 B.C., when Quinctius Flaminius, after the victory over the Macedonians, here proclaimed to the assembled Greeks that Rome gave Hellas back its freedom. The shout set up by the multitude was so loud, Plutarch tells, that the birds flying over the place fell down dead. And like a comment to this story we now heard the faint voices of the birds in the clear morning air, voices which, despite everything, have drowned this great shout and let not only the people, but all their houses, porticoes and arenas sink down into the earth, down under the gentle hills and the pines that bear their fragile nests.

The road suddenly leaves the pine wood and climbs up to the bare



plateau forming the Corinthian Isthmus. Here it joins the main highroad Athens-Corinth-Nauplion, which turned out to be an excellent asphalt road made by the Americans after the war. We could not wish for a better road, and we skimmed over the plain toward the blue Gulf of Corinth, which opened out like a decorative landscape painting in the morning sun. In the background were high mountains and the white houses of Nea-Korintos nestling as peacefully by the blue water as though neither the great earthquake of 1928, when the greater part of the town was wiped out, nor the last war and its bombardment had ever been. The town no longer seemed quite so idyllic when we rode through it, but compared with Patras, Corinth is a city for the gods; most of the houses are newly built and instead of a slovenly trading port there is a fine promenade. The old Corinth, or Palea-Korintos, is six kilometers farther away on the coast, but that was for another day; we continued south along the main road around the mighty rock formation of Acro-Corinthus. All ancient Greek cities had their acropolis, their castle rock, where the royal palace and later the treasury, the city garrison and the temples were situated, but no other city can boast of an acropolis like Corinth's. With its 1,600-foot-high cliff it strategically dominates the entire isthmus between the Peloponnese and the mainland, across which innumerable armies have fought their way, from the dawn of history when the Dorians pushed south to crush the glory of Mycenae, to the terrible massacres during the 19th century struggle for freedom against the Turks and the last war, when the German armored columns were fired on from up here. Acro-Corinthus is not a hill but a mountain, which to the peaceful tourist down on the road resembles a celestial city, when he sees the long, winding battlements crowning the plateau, a work of the 13th century French crusaders who lingered here on the way to Jerusalem.

We rode through poor, but as always in Greece surprisingly clean, villages, where at a *kafeneion* in the shade of a huge tree we

could fortify ourselves with excellent Turkish coffee and fresh spring water before riding on in the blazing sun. The road climbed in wide coils up among the mountains until we suddenly looked down from the Dervenaki pass on to the other side across the wide Argos plain, Agamemnon's kingdom. A good six miles down toward the valley was a signpost with the word *Mycènes* in faded letters. Even though the majority of tourists before the war were Germans and English, and after the war English and Americans, the Greeks—touchy where their national independence is concerned—with their road signs prefer to address foreigners in French, the time-honored language of diplomacy. A bumpy side road led us to an ordinary little village without a trace of classic history about it, but suddenly Mona called out "Stop!" and outside a somewhat dilapidated building I noticed a sign with the words: *La Belle Hélène de Ménélas*. What? Was this the famous hotel praised by countless travelers, the idyllic spot that had enchanted both archeologists and tourists? Granted that the name means a lot to the clientele who come here thinking more of myths and fantasies than of comfort, and granted that there is pleasure in eating roast lamb prepared by Electra and served by Orestes, but this cannot quite explain the charm of *La Belle Hélène* spoken of so much in former days. No doubt it was the old host Dimitri's personality, disinterestedness and childish enthusiasm for ancient relics which gave the unpretentious hotel its nice atmosphere. Now the old boy is dead and his son Orestes has taken over. He received us with a professional amiability which wrung our hearts, proudly showing a letter from the then Crown Prince Gustaf Adolf of Sweden which was hanging in a frame on the wall of the vestibule, and getting out Axel Persson's book on the excavations at Dendera in which his father had taken part in the capacity of cook. Perhaps the only thing wrong was that Orestes was no longer the gaily smiling boy of the photographs in the travel books of the 1920s but had grown up into the director of a company that

made money? Had it not been for the war, the old building would have been replaced long ago by a proper tourist hotel, for *La Belle Hélène* is the only hotel in Mycenae and the stream of tourists is growing.

On this particular morning, however, we had a pleasant reminder that modern tourism has not yet invaded Greece completely. As we stood talking to Orestes in the hotel dining room, a very sunburned, shock-headed young woman dressed in spotted shorts came into the room, followed a moment later by a donkey with a substantial pack on its back. There was a great to-do, Orestes clearly finding the dignity of the hotel in danger through the donkey's presence; but however hard all the Iphigenias and Casandras from the kitchen tugged at its scraggy tail and long ears the stubborn animal refused to back out again, and not until its owner called "Demosthenes!" severely did it follow her out. Later we were joined by the pair on our way from the hotel to the mound of ruins some distance farther on. The shock-headed woman was rather shy to begin with, but when we said that we had already seen her at Olympia, where her donkey had cropped dry grass at the stadium while she was making a sketch of Pheidias' studio, she grew more communicative. She was English, a painter by profession, she could speak modern Greek quite well and during the winter had stayed at the English archeological school in Athens. Early in the spring she had bought Demosthenes for a few pounds and was now traversing the whole of Greece on foot. Both she and the donkey spent the nights out in the open, she never went to a hotel or restaurant but bought her food straight from the peasants and it was by pure chance that she had looked in at *La Belle Hélène* to ask after an acquaintance, an archeologist who was staying there. Demosthenes was not beautiful; in fact he was lean and angular, but he bore uncomplainingly a pack with painting gear, two battered suitcases, an easel and a set of blackened saucepans. He was also very affectionate, as we had already seen

at the hotel, and during months of adventures shared in common the relationship between the two had clearly developed into that perfect understanding which often causes old married couples, retired generals and their batmen or dogs and their mistresses to acquire a surprising family likeness. The Englishwoman and her donkey were strikingly alike, both as regards their stubborn yet gentle appearance and their slow, easy walk—the kind of walk that will take you far. I will not deny that I felt a prick of envy at the thought of getting to know Greece in this way. We had our boat, certainly, to bring us in touch with the sea and the coast in another but perhaps equally primordial way, but we did not come as near to the mountains, paths, villages and population, we had to make the best of the highroads and Baedeker's stars. We parted company up at Mycenae's acropolis, for we had a mutual respect for each other's lyrical feelings when face to face with the fortress of the sons of Atreus. But I could not help smiling when I saw from a distance that Demosthenes was showing just as great an interest in the Lion's Gate as his mistress and could *not* be persuaded by the caretaker to wait outside.

Mycenae's name is great, and when one thinks that the Mycenaean culture was once spread over the whole of the eastern Mediterranean and was so illustrious that even hundreds of years after its fall it could rise again forever in the epic legends of Homer, when one thinks of this, the meeting with its geographical and archeological reality is a disturbing reminder of the transience of all human greatness. Of the golden Mycenae there is little more than the horizon left, the shimmering plain to the south and the bare mountain peaks toward which the guards of the city gazed night after night, watching for the beacon fires with the news of the fall of Troy and Agamemnon's homecoming. Two imposing monuments are left, however, to testify to the place's former greatness: the circular wall of the acropolis, with the Lion's Gate, and Atreus' Treasury. It is not only the thought of Agamemnon,

"king of the hosts," who stopped in his chariot in front of this gate, or of the captive Cassandra who smelt blood in these stones and prophesied new and terrible sacrifices—it is not only the memory of the gloomy legend of Atreus' sons which makes the Lion's Gate one of the great monuments of Greece. It has a great and somber beauty independent of all associations, although the relief with the Cretan pillar, tapering at the bottom and flanked by two hieratic, half-Babylonian lions, is still, in its fateful severity, completely untouched by the Greek spirit.

But the most remarkable monument at Mycenae is what is called Atreus' Treasury, a gigantic cupola tomb sunk in the earth and shaped like a beehive. There are many cupola tombs both at Mycenae and elsewhere in Greece, but none is so monumental, so pure in its form and so technically perfect as Atreus' Treasury. It is an architectonic masterpiece in the same class as the pyramids of Egypt and its origin has been much discussed. Some archeologists maintain that it was built by a Cretan builder and was taken as a model for all the worse-built and degenerate cupola tombs on the mainland; others have seen in Atreus' Treasury the perfect final product of a long process of development, the culmination of all the groping experiments. The last-named theory is now more generally accepted—that the cupola tomb as a type of building is a product of the Greek mainland, and not Minoan.

The name "Atreus' Treasury" is interesting, as it shows the fundamental difference in the conception of the purpose of a monumental building in our time and the Mycenaean. What justification could a solidly built, underground chamber, obviously of vital importance, have in the eyes of men at the beginning of the 19th century? It could not be a temple, it was reasoned, for temples are always built for the worshipers, either so that they can assemble inside the shrine as the Christian ones, or outside as the ancient Greek ones. Nor can it be a tomb; according to the motive still put forward in our schoolbooks in connection with the Egyptian

pyramids, the ancient kings built their gigantic tombs out of inordinate vanity. The cupola tomb at Mycenae, on the other hand, does not flaunt itself, hidden as it is in the ground. The only explanation was that this was a treasury, a forerunner to the Bank of England's well-guarded gold vaults. This misconception persisted until research into archeology and the history of religion had thoroughly revised the general idea of the tomb's significance in the dawn of time.

What is a tomb? To us northerners it is nowadays primarily a place of remembrance where one of our equals has been received again into the arms of nature, reverted to the earth, the grass and the trees. Our cemeteries have very much this pantheistic atmosphere so foreign to Christianity, they are not places of horror where annihilation prevails, but gardens where one is not shocked by meeting either children at play, couples making love or solitary strollers listening to the birds. The cemeteries in the south, on the other hand, are pervaded entirely by the Christian doctrine of the resurrection. They are like waiting rooms, or rather cloak rooms, where the earthly husks are stored while waiting for the great fall of the curtain, when all souls come to resume their outer garments. And just as theater cloak rooms are arranged with special sections for the more wealthy public, who can quickly and conveniently find their belongings without the risk of getting them mixed up with other people's, so are the graves of the upper classes arranged for collection conformable to their station when the judgment trumpets sound; while in front of the large charnel houses into which the remains of the poor are ruthlessly tossed after ten years so that other dead can molder in the few and crowded graves, there is every danger on Judgment Day of the most irritating crush and jumbling together of *meum* and *tuum*. No wonder that the oppressed, when it comes to a revolution, take the chance of aveng-

ing themselves even on the dead, and scatter the bones from royal burial vaults and family chapels to the four winds. In this way the French royal house, among others, will one day have to hunt for their remains in the most unlikely places, while the rabble for the most part will find theirs where they left them. But however different the Christian cemeteries may be—from the catacombs of Rome to Père Lachaise in Paris, from the imperial crypts in Vienna and the Escorial to Spanish country churchyards with the inscription *Resurrecturis* carved on the high enclosing wall—there is the same temporary cloak room atmosphere everywhere, the same macabre emptiness which is inevitable when old, castoff clothes are heaped together. The only difference is that this air of desertion is twice as clamorous when the garments are so personal, so molded by their wearers as the clothes of the soul.

The burial places from pre-Christian times make quite a different impression. Here the tomb is something living and great: the dwelling of the dead. This means that architecturally the tomb is given the form of a dwelling house in a more lasting material. But the tomb is not only a dwelling but also a temple. The ancients believed that every human being, by dying, became a divinity, who either roamed about like a straying demon if he had no tomb, or became an active helper if he was kept supplied with sacrifices. In ancient Greece, just as in Etruria, religion was originally a feudal family cult with the father as priest and the dead heads of the family as worshipped divinities. In the great families the succession of these ancestors always led back to mythical heroes and the Olympian gods, whose countless love affairs largely originated in the need of having them as relations. Only by way of the city founder and the royal family did these private house gods gradually develop into city gods and national protectors. At Mycenae this process is in full swing: the dead king, more powerful than ever, continued to rule over his city and it was quite natural that the population built such a dwelling for him as "Atreus' Treasury."

The dead were literally thought to be present in the tomb, as is clearly apparent from the harrowing scene in Aeschylus' *Choëphoroe*, where Orestes and Electra, at Agamemnon's tomb, beseech the murdered man's spirit with sacrifices and incantations to step forth and help them be avenged. The cupola building at Mycenae is thus a temple which was built without any regard to worshipers—it was enough that the sons could produce the sacrifices—and a tomb whose costly formation has nothing to do with royal self-assertion, only with the State's evident interest to make sure of the good will of the great and mighty deity, the king of Hades, who lived there.

After visiting "Atreus' Treasury" and its more unpretentious sisters near by, we strolled around inside the walls of the Mycenaean acropolis. English archeologists are at present busy with big excavations here, and the finds are supposed to be very rich. They have no chance, however, of eclipsing Schliemann's feat, the discovery of the gold treasure in Mycenae's shaft tombs with "Agamemnon's death-mask," jewels and two-handed swords; this, in common with the opening of Tutankhamen's tomb, the finds at Ur and a few other great discoveries, will retain its unique place in the exciting history of archeology. But from a research point of view the latest finds are undoubtedly of great value and we were sorry that we had chanced to come to Mycenae on the holy Pantaleimon's day, when all the workers had a holiday and even the archeologists had taken a day off. We saw only several hundred earthenware vessels stacked up inside the Lion's Gate, anxiously guarded by an old shepherd who was but little versed in archeological problems.

During our wanderings in Mycenae we found that the entire city rise is strewn with ancient potsherds, just as we had seen the previous summer in the Punic city of Tharros in Sardinia. The sherds, of fired, indestructible clay, are clearly what is left when the stones from dead cities have been removed or have crumbled



away, the wooden beams have moldered and the wind has blown the dust out of the plundered tombs. We found some excellent sherds, some of them painted with red, geometrical patterns and easy to date. On the way back we sorted out three or four of the best and threw the others away. We did the same thing at most of the other archeological places during our journey, and now we have a whole box of potsherds, marked with the name of the place where they were found: the fruits of an undoubtedly childish souvenir mania but for us a magic link, not only with the stages of our journey, but with the unknown people, long since dead, whose daily lives were once interwoven with water pitchers, beakers and sacrificial bowls now broken. I do not think Greece is the poorer by the loss of the sherds, for in this country they are as plentiful as the spring flowers and the earth is constantly yielding new ones.

Orestes' lunch at *La Belle Hélène* was not very good and wickedly expensive. By way of compensation we met the extremely nice ephor Papadimitri, state archeologist for the Peloponnese and on a tour of inspection to Mycenae. He was an unassuming and cultivated man who spoke less of archeology and classic history than of the Greek Government's financial difficulties in the matter of protecting monuments and restoring museums. Postwar Greece is financed almost entirely by the United States. Money has been given for food, housing, roads, shipping and defense, but evidently museums and archeology are considered less important. Both the National Museum and the Acropolis Museum in Athens are without the means to display their collections, and Mr. Papadimitri himself had a smaller salary than his driver, who was employed by the Ministry of Transport.

We had thought at first of staying the night at Mycenae, but our disappointment over the manifestly venal and no longer beautiful Helen, coupled with Mr. Papadimitri's promise to write a letter of introduction to the museum curator at Epidaurus, made us change

our plans. The Lambretta, like a wasp intoxicated with honey, buzzed down in the afternoon sun from Mycenae's bare mountain fastness toward the tilled fields of the Argos Plain. Argos itself has little of archeological interest at the present time; like the majority of Greek cities it is an enlarged village, swarming with peasants in all the cafés. It took us a long time to thread our way through a forest of shiny, saluting horse rumps, whose multiplicity harmonized well with the Homeric epithet for Argos: "the horse-breeding Argos." Chased by a swarm of angry horseflies we rode on along the excellent road between fertile fields until we came to a village which looked unusually modern but which the inhabitants assured us was Tiryns. At first this seemed impossible. How could this flat arable land and this unattractive village be Tiryns, the impregnable fortress built by the Cyclops, the rival of Mycenae and the terror of Argos? There are buildings which survive their landscape and it is not always the horizon which changes least in a historic spot. A medieval hunting lodge in the middle of London's factory area is not more out of place in its new environment than Tiryns' fortress on the Nauplion Plain. Gone are the marshes and lakes that surrounded the fortified mound, gone are its steep slopes. The fortress itself, on the other hand, is extraordinarily well preserved and greatly surpasses Mycenae. The ramp up is cunningly turned to the left so that the attacker must expose his right side, unguarded by the shield, to the defenders; the spacious casemates with their dark passages can still serve as a refuge in time of war and the foundations of the living quarters with megaron rooms and propylaea between the courtyards give a good idea of what this fortress once looked like. You get the impression here, more than at Mycenae, that the walls smell of blood, tears, thralldom and primitive savagery, and you understand why later generations could not conceive how ordinary humans had dragged these huge blocks of stone, weighing from fifteen to twenty tons, from the far-off mountains and then piled them up one on top of the other, and

therefore created the legend of the Cyclops as the builders of Tiryns. But if this warlike and brutal side is the most apparent, Schliemann's and Dörpfeld's excavations in 1884 revealed that luxury, refinement and a pronounced love of art were hidden inside the shell of this fresco-filled stronghold. To the 19th century way of thinking this was a greater paradox than it is to us. Even from our time, the Age of Concrete, the archeologists of the future will be amazed to find exquisite traces of culture in bunkers and underground air-raid shelters. We saw unmistakable evidence on the very spot that barbarism has scarcely lessened during the three thousand years or more since the fortress was built. During the last war a deep trench was dug right through the ornamental foundations and below the mound was a house with gaping door and a placard stuck up in the doorway. Fortunately I knew enough Greek to make out that the placard was not a "to let" sign or an invitation to come in, but a warning of mortal danger. The house was still mined and no one dared to go inside.

We continued our journey and by sunset had got as far as Nauplion, which lay reflected in its quiet bay, so serene among the trees, so cool with its white porticoes, so homely and old-fashioned that, like two pilgrims before entering the holy city, we rode straight down to the beach to let the clear waves wash off both the dust of the road and the dejection left by the bloodstained strongholds of Atreus' sons. Cool and refreshed, we then made our way into the town, where we were somewhat startled to see that the dilapidated hotel down by the quay called itself the "New Hotel." We had a simple but good dinner and, what was better, a room with two comfortable beds and a view across the bay toward the little island where, according to the guidebook, Nauplion's hangman lives as a hermit, "a criminal condemned to death but reprieved in order to execute others under sentence of death." What an idea for a dramatist of the modern "anguish" school! What a chance to show, in profound symbolism, that life

can only be bought at the cost of other people's death, to analyze society's need of outcasts and to demonstrate the all-redeeming power of love. A young fisher-girl, for instance, can row past and fall in love with the hangman, or a young lady of quality can be sent out to him to be beheaded. All that matters is to bring them together on the deserted island with beautiful Nauplion in the background and to give them an opportunity of uttering eternal truths about life and death. The idea is offered gratis on condition that the play ends unhappily as it should.

Next morning we went on to Asine, known from the Swedish excavations of 1922-26. We found nothing of particular archeological interest, but the place is extremely beautiful, with a rugged point sticking out into the sea from one of the best sand beaches I have seen, islands floating on the blue surface of the Gulf of Nauplion and a little white-washed orthodox church in front of an enclosed and shady courtyard, where the Swedish archeologists may have had their base and in any case where Italian coastguard soldiers were quartered during the last war. Here they had built a genuine Italian loggia for themselves as a change from their batteries out on the point, and we found proud inscriptions made when the cement was soft and Mussolini's imperial dreams solid: *W IL DUCE, MARE NOSTRO* and *NOI TIREREMO DIRITTO*. The gun emplacements are interesting, as the few remains of the Mycenaean city on the acropolis have been used as building material.

The day was very hot and the waves broke in foaming garlands against the virgin shore. The guidebook did mention a "Mycenaean necropolis" somewhere up in the mountains, but on this morning we too thought that all archeological finds were only a lot of dead stones. We had a long, lazy swim and then strolled to the little god-forsaken open-air café near the beach; one or two of the local people might possibly have found their way there on Sundays, but this was a weekday and there were only a few hens scratching

about among the chairs. The proprietor was lying asleep in the shade of the palm-leaf roof on a couple of tables pushed together, and we discreetly followed his example. There was a cool breeze blowing off the sea and as the siesta hours glided past we lay dreaming of our next great adventure: the ancient theater at Epidaurus.

Buildings may be likened to mollusk shells, solid materializations around the life that forms them—for it is the snail's soft body which decides the shell's growth and whorls; in the same way the buildings uncovered by the archeologist's spade are a counterpart to the empty shells on the beach, the petrified confines of a long since vanished life which nevertheless lingers in them like a singing murmur. Temples built to forgotten gods, tombs carved out for races now extinct—storm-tossed shells cast up by chance out of the sea of time. But among these shells is there any which sings more loudly than the ancient theaters? A temple may have a deeper song, a villa at Pompeii or Delos a more enchanting one, but for spontaneous power of suggestion nothing excels these semicircles built around an empty space, these concentric benches facing a stage where nothing happens any more.

The first time I saw an ancient theater was in Paris. A group of students played Sophocles among the remains of the combined arena and unpretentious Roman provincial theater in the Lutetia quarter, but a modern city's grimy gables and dreary rows of windows were pressing in too close to allow of any illusion. I got a more living impression later in Verona, where green lizards were sunning themselves on the spectators' benches of the little theater by the bend of the Adige River; and in Fiesole I saw, behind the ruined stage, the same unspoiled landscape which, two thousand years ago, was dyed just as blue by the sunset, while the audience, having had their fill of Plautus' entanglements, sauntered home in a world already ancient. The Fiesole theater with its view of cypress-covered hills is perhaps the most beautiful Roman theater in Italy, and surpasses by far the famous ruins at Taormina in Sicily, where

the overwhelming view of the sea, the coast and Etna's snow-capped cone form an unclassical element which is enough in itself. But at Taormina one is not far from the noble forerunner and model of the Roman stage: the Greek theater. Sicily has a ruin where Aeschylus himself, Pindar and Plato sat on light spring evenings: the eternally august theater of Syracuse. The only place where historic memories survive as strongly is the Dionysus theater in Athens itself, the place where the drama was born in the shadow of the Acropolis. These two theaters, at Syracuse and Athens, are unsurpassed as regards tradition, but have suffered sorely from being rebuilt by the Romans and from the ravages of time. For anyone who wants to get a really vivid idea of what a Greek theater looked like there is only one thing to do—go to Epidaurus.

It took us all afternoon to reach this inaccessible spot from Asine. The road was stony and narrow and after the cultivated fields of the first few miles led us into a landscape so desolate and sterile that even by Greek standards it seemed depressing. Now and then we rode along below a rugged mountain ridge crowned by Cyclopean walls, according to the guidebook an acropolis for some ancient city, so forgotten that its very name has been lost. No people, no houses, apart from one or two miserable villages with houses shadowed by fig trees and occasionally on the rocky slopes a shepherd tending his flock. What could sheep find to eat on ground where even the thistles had withered? At last, as night was falling, we reached a sparse pine wood and softly undulating country no longer strewn with stones. The road swung round a vast oval sunk into the ground, encircled by spectators' benches, obviously an ancient stadium, and between the trunks we caught a glimpse of pillars and ruins: we were at Epidaurus.

Was it the moonlight and our late arrival or the place's unique atmosphere which made this evening one of the most unforgettable during the whole of our Greek journey? Everything was mysterious and at the same time self-evident: the dignified and bearded curator,

Eryximachos, who read our letter of introduction from the ephor, Papadimitri; the moonlit courtyard in front of the museum's façade; and the little cottage where the curator's wife, Penelope, got our dinner ready by the light of a flickering candle. One or two shepherds were talking in a soft monotone over a bottle of *resina*, set out on the base of a column, and we ourselves sat down at another column-table and did our best to talk in broken Greek to Eryximachos, who knew the then Crown Prince of Sweden, Professor Persson, and most of the other archeologists we mentioned.

But our vocabulary was soon exhausted and we could sink into the boundless peace of the place. The moon was large and full above the mountains—these mountains which form a natural barrier round Epidaurus and shut in time itself in this sheltered valley. The air was heavy with the scent of pines, the ruins gleamed through the tree and the minutes—or was it the centuries?—tiptoed past over the needle-strewn ground. For dinner we had fish fried in oil, large slices of gray bread and olives, resinous wine and water from the spring. Before Eryximachos, with the house's one candle in his shaking hand, led us to the guest room in the museum building, we took a stroll to the theater close by. It lay there so supernaturally intact in the moon's dead light, so untouched by time, that we were gripped by a secret terror—as though we had been presumptuous enough to step into the wrong century. All legends of journeys through history, of the minute which is turned by magic into eternity, became vividly alive, and we quite expected Sophocles' spirit in a white toga to step down from the benches and state in good film English that life is but a dream.

We slept well after our long journey, despite the open window, the moonlight, the ruins and the chirping crickets. But when the sun rose over the mountains at six o'clock we were already sitting, rested and expectant, at the column-table outside Penelope's hut drinking a cup of black Turkish coffee. When traveling in Greece

during the summer months you must take advantage of the cool mornings, and we wanted to study the theater thoroughly before the day got too hot. No one disturbed us during the long morning in this place so seldom visited by tourists; the stillness was as complete as during the moonlight visit of the night. Perhaps this was why my thoughts took such a strange turn when, beginning with the construction of the theater, I tried to get clear in my mind what the Greeks meant by a spectator.

The drama arose, as Nietzsche ingeniously states, out of the Dionysian satyr festival. One can imagine a first stage when the citizens, singing and dancing in a religious procession, gathered round the god's altar. Who was a spectator? Dionysus himself, but no one else, for the old people, the women and children who stood looking on—as they still do in African Negro villages when the men dance their hunt- and war-dances—were passive participants rather than curious outsiders. We can, for that matter, find much nearer examples of ceremonies without spectators in the religious services in our own churches: here, too, there are in principle only participants—the priests, who have the most to do, and the congregation, who have a few responses to say and gestures to perform. The oldest drama was a similar ceremony, with an active chorus of specially trained citizens and a surrounding crowd of passive participants. Not even when one, and later several actors were crystallized out of the chorus to personify the mythical figures being sung about, not even when Aeschylus let Orestes and Prometheus appear as living people, did the drama lose this character of a common rite and experiencing of the divine.

All this is reflected clearly in the construction of the theater. Dörpfeld has shown that the oldest "theater" in Athens was only an altar surrounded by a circular space, the orchestra. When in the fifth century fixed benches were built for the passive participants, they were allowed to surround the orchestra in a semicircle, and the orchestra thus became the theater's architectural center



just as it was its spiritual. It was there that the main performance, that is, the reactions of the public incarnated in the chorus, took place; while the stage, originally only a temporary wooden building in front of which the actors appeared, was placed in the background and was really a kind of secondary reflection, a tableau-like illustration of the emotions of the chorus. This theater, which we can call the Aeschylarian, was therefore a building for those who were taking part, not for spectators.

The attitude of the spectator—the ability to witness the drama with artistic curiosity and purely for the sake of watching, unhampered by social and religious motives—developed in Greece as the importance of the chorus decreased. The chorus and the spectator are the antitheses of each other: for the artistic theater to be born out of the religious, the representatives of the audience's participation in the drama must disappear and the main weight of the performance be shifted from the orchestra to the increasingly important stage. This was now built of stone and began to acquire interchangeable coulisses. The odd and decisive thing is, however, that the orchestra remained the theater's center even after it had become empty with the disappearance of the chorus. One explanation of this is that during the Hellenistic age the old classics were still sometimes played and so a place for the chorus was still needed; others maintain that architecture is a conservative art which is apt to retain unnecessary elements from earlier stages of development.

Both explanations are probably right, but a third and more essential one occurred to me as I sat on the spectators' benches of Epidauros' vast stone shell. Granted that this building, like all other 4th century theaters, was built for a drama which had already become profane and for passive spectators who were merely looking on at the game we call art; but there is, notwithstanding, a difference between spectators and spectators. Just as the theater still had the empty space for the chorus' participation in the play,

in the same way the spectator—although he was a passive onlooker during the illusionary complications of the theatrical performance—still had within him the plane on which, under the eye of the god, he took up an attitude to fate, the plane on which he was a human being. The Greek spectator was a person who only superficially ceased to take part and who, in the game of art, only temporarily moved outside its center. That is why the orchestra in his theater remained intact: the building continued to be the exact reflection of his relationship to the drama.

For the Romans, the Greeks' orchestra was twice too big. They made it into a semicircle, which meant that the theater's constructive center lay exactly on the borderline between the spectators' part and the stage. On the remaining part of the orchestra the Romans placed seats of honor for their magistrates, thereby literally placing the spectator in the center of interest. At the same time there occurred a cleavage: the actual performance on the stage, and the audience's gaping at itself, at notabilities, wealth and beauty in the auditorium. From then on a visit to the theater had an air of a popular festival, quite outside the drama itself.

It was this external side that was best preserved through the Middle Ages, while the performances, in the form of mystery plays, again became religious ceremonies based on active and passive participants instead of on spectators. Artistic drama, and with it the theater building, did not rise again until the Renaissance. But if you look at Palladio's famous theater at Vicenza you will see something which is new since ancient times: the extension of the stage. Behind the three column-flanked portals of the classical theater there is a street scene created by tricks of perspective, an illusionary space which quickly draws to itself both the play and the imagination of the audience. From his seat in the auditorium the spectator was transported from his fellow-spectators and the present to the world of imagination which contemporary painting dealt with exclusively, the artificial kingdom which art now set out

to create. Meanwhile, the present moment took its revenge during the intervals, and having forgotten himself during the play, the spectator took part all the more eagerly when the curtain had fallen. During the whole of this new age the theater was the social meeting place *par excellence*, an Eldorado of ambitious and amorous intrigues. The theaters were also consciously built for this double purpose: partly with deep stages for all the paraphernalia of illusion, partly with foyers, boxes and galleries which made possible a social festival. Stendhal tells how the privately owned boxes at La Scala in Milan had their own small curtains which could be drawn even during the performance if one preferred to devote oneself to social intercourse. The modern theater's dual purpose is perhaps most clearly shown by the switchboard: the festive lighting before the performance begins, but when the curtain rises a semidarkness which has deepened with the passing of the ages, from the sunlight in the ancient theater to the spotlights focused on our stage of today. It is no empty metaphor to say that darkness sinks down over the auditorium according as the personality of the spectator is dispersed.

The final result is the modern moving picture, where the last flickerings of the spectator's awareness that he is taking part in a festival are extinguished in the abolition of the intervals and the anonymous darkness during the performance. Deliberately facing forward instead of concentrically grouped, deeply ensconced in soft seats instead of vigilantly aligned on stone benches, tired city dwellers set off on conducted tours in the confined bus compartments of the movies, away from themselves to the land that does not exist. They collect according to the timetable. There are several busses each evening, and if you miss one you take the next. Even the theater in its extreme form of "a room with the fourth wall taken away" did what it could to transport the audience from the theater and the present moment, but they were still living people appearing on the stage, who, by their artistic triumphs,

gave the performance an air of festivity and wonder. Films definitely abolish this relic: everything nowadays is conducive to a denial of the present time and place. Is it any longer possible to speak of spectators when faced with these people who have utterly renounced and absented themselves? Is there anything to be found in these dark auditoriums but an anonymous release from the duty of being anybody, of living? Gone is every architectural vestige of the place where the chorus once rejoiced and suffered and where later the aesthetic spectator was put; gone, too, the corresponding inner realities. Our ancient heritage cannot be denied more completely.

It was a pessimistic conclusion to which the stones of Epidaurus brought me step by step. I had begun by comparing the theater to a shell, but when, after our long climb up and down the spectators' benches, we stood again in the circle of the orchestra, it was rather of a skull that I thought. The western spirit, with all its newly won freedom but also its dependence on a faith, was once inscribed within this circle. The history of the theater's slow reformation by encroachment on the orchestra is also the history of western man, and the definite disappearance of this circle on our stages is therefore a fact which cannot augur well.

Epidaurus has other things to offer besides its theater, chiefly the cross between a ruined temple and sanatorium to which the sick in ancient times made a pilgrimage to be cured by the god Asclepius, the old professional god of our modern Aesculapians. All this, together with the exquisite architectural fragment of the museum, is very interesting to the visitor, but pales in comparison with the theater. When at last we had culled the best of all this the sun had already reached the zenith and its reign was so despotic, so terroristic, that all nature held its breath and all life sought shelter

from the pitiless rays. Penelope had set the table for lunch under the thickest of the pine trees in front of the museum and when she brought out the food she made a long detour round the shimmering courtyard. Our room had also been got ready for the three or four hours' siesta which is a matter of course in this climate, but we steeled ourselves and made a move immediately after coffee. Experience had taught us that during the hot, breathless hours of sunshine, when the temperature in the shade is anything up to 105° F., it was just as well to ride a motorcycle—it was, in fact, much more pleasant to have a current of air around us in this way than to gasp for breath in a closed room. Farewell Eryximachos, farewell Penelope and thank you for looking after us so well for a whole day and night, for a sum which was less than the price of the omelette at *La Belle Hélène*. It was a strange ride through the countryside as it lay in the fierce embrace of the sun. The light was so strong that it almost turned to darkness and Mona said in surprise: "But this is like driving in moonlight!" And she was right: the motionless torpor in which everything lay, the luminous silver tone which killed all color, the difficulty of judging distance, the unreality, were all the same. Like two messengers from another world we rushed along through this landscape, which consisted the whole time of sharply varying layers of air: the hot belt of air heavy with the stupefying perfumes of the mountain shrubs, a cooler breath now and then from the ravines, furnace air in passes between walls of rock, and in spots a sudden waft of fresh sea salt which had found its way in from the coast. All at once, there was the sea, dark as ink and with a white rim of foam against the rocky coast. Again we had a swim in the clear waves below Nauplion's high citadel, and then, having bought a huge bunch of blue grapes, we went on along the asphalt road toward Corinth. Mona sat feeding me as we drove, and at Tiryns the grapes were all gone. But can anyone guess who appeared up on the crest of the castle hill? Demosthenes,

with ears pricked, and the English girl-hiker, who recognized us instantly and had time to wave before we vanished round the next bend.

We got to Corinth just in time to buy a beefsteak from the butcher before closing time. When at last we dipped down on to the little side road at Isthmia the moon was gleaming over the pine groves almost as mysteriously as on the previous evening at Epidaurus. As we pulled up on the quay the harbor watchman gave us a friendly grin from his window, and pointing to *Daphne*, said: "All right!" Everything was indeed all right when we got aboard, and soon the delicious smell of beefsteak wafted out over the harbor basin. Mona set the table out on deck under the lamp and we thought how wonderful it was to be home.

But that was not the end of the day. From the café opposite, where a little flat-bottomed ferry which plied backward and forward across the canal tied up, excited voices could be heard declaiming, and our friend the harbor master shouted out as he was rowed past by two sailors: "Teatron! Teatron!" It must be an open-air film show, we thought, but rowed over in the dinghy all the same. Our surprise and delight were therefore all the greater. I am far too ignorant to be able to give an account of the history and artistic requirements of the shadow-theater, but I do know that it has reached its highest stage of development in Indonesia and obviously is a Mohammedan art form. It must have come to Greece with the Turks, but in common with the oriental music it has grown so much part of the people's consciousness that it has become national. Here in Isthmia it was a quaint little man who had put up his white cloth between two posts in front of the café. While his wife sold the tickets he himself, flanked by two powerful kerosene lamps, stood on a stool behind the screen and manipulated with fantastic dexterity the sticks leading to the arms and legs of the flat figures, which were about two feet long. They were homemade, but of the same pointed type as Javanese marionettes, which is

evidently necessary to make the shadows effective. The drama which the old man improvised in accordance with the audience's wishes was about a fair maid, a tyrannical prince and a small but bragging figure who got such a hiding that at last the sticks got tangled up and the performance had to be stopped. It was utterly inconceivable how a single person could maneuver these three figures all at the same time and carry on illusionary conversations, in which the maid's languishing and coquettish speeches were answered now by a stalwart bass, now by a villainous nasal voice whose impudent sallies made the audience—mostly seamen from caïques waiting to pass through the canal and peasants from round about—bellow with laughter and thump the rickety tables so that the *ouzo* glasses bounced. The night was warm, the moonlight gleamed and now and then a steamer with portholes alight glided past on the canal. Were we in Suez, Calcutta or Batavia? No, we had found but another thread in the web we had followed during our morning walk at Epidaurus, for if Europe begins in Greece, Africa and Asia begin here too. Without that weft, without the impulses from south and east, neither Greece nor Europe would have been what they are.

Next day we went to Palea Korintos, Old Corinth, which was excavated by the American archeological school. The ruins do not quite come up to what one would expect of a city which at an early stage was one of the most flourishing in Greece. Corinth, whose prosperity and strategic importance often attracted foreign aggressors, suffered the unhappy fate in 146 B.C. of being completely wiped out by Mummius' Roman legions. The entire population was carried off as slaves and the plow passed over the ruins. A hundred years later Corinth had risen again as a Roman colony and the city in which the apostle Paul preached Christianity was justly reckoned as one of the most luxurious and morally corrupt in the ancient world. But the ruins which the Americans have excavated are very largely Roman and in Palea Korintos today it is really only

the seven columns of the Apollo Temple which bear witness to older times.

The visit was very interesting to us, however, thanks to our meeting with the American archeologists working in the place. We had a letter from Professor Amandry at Delphi to the supervisor of the Corinth excavations, Professor Weinberg, who hummed to and fro in a jeep between two working parties busy in different parts of the ruins. With a speed and efficiency that would have done credit to builders of an airport an ancient road was unearthed in one spot and in the other a part of the quarter where the ancient potters had their workshops. If the ruins themselves were not so overwhelming, the technical execution of the excavations, the presentation of the buildings and the order everywhere were exemplary, and the museum, which had recently been enlarged, was by far the most tasteful museum externally and the best arranged internally that we saw in Greece. Especially fine were its collections of geometrical, orientalizing and proto-Corinthian pottery from the city's own famous workshops, whose products were once exported everywhere in the Mediterranean. In the earth around the workshops thousands of rejected vessels have been found which failed in the firing or which became streaked or deformed; they give an interesting insight into the technical secrets of ancient pottery making.

Weinberg was brimming with energy and spirited plans for the future.

"We shall soon have excavated and made public the whole of the Roman Corinth, but only part of the Greek. The next stage is to move all the Roman city away and set to work in earnest to unearth the older buildings. There is city upon city here as in Troy."

Among the archeologists at the lunch table we made the pleasant acquaintance of Oscar Broneer, who was born in Sweden but emigrated to America in his youth. He was delighted to speak Swedish, and later, out in the ruins, he demonstrated a trick he had discov-



ered of the ancient Dionysus priests to dupe a credulous public and perform lucrative miracles. He had found a secret underground passage through which they could creep in and deftly change the water, poured down by the sacrificers through a hole in the altar, into wine which ran out at its foot. An ingenious explanation indeed of the religious mysteries, well suited to make the ancient superstitions stand out in their true light even for the ordinary readers of popular monthly magazines, in which the whole thing can be illustrated with a drawing showing both the amazement of the toga-clad worshipers and the sly smile of the priest. The Frenchmen at Delphi lag behind here, for with a little good will the humbug with the oracle could no doubt be shown up as well.

But perhaps the best thing in Corinth is Acro-Corinthus. All day long, while wandering about among the stones down in the city, we had glanced up at its hazy blue ridge, but the heat was so terrible that we put off climbing it hour after hour. The thought of the thousands of slaves whom King Sisyphus, the founder of Corinth, had forced to carry blocks of stone up to the top for the building of the fortress and the temple, filled us with respect for the gods who had sentenced him to such a righteous punishment in eternity. We thought also, with a certain wonder, of the famous Aphrodite Temple at Acro-Corinthus and its thousand ravishingly beautiful priestesses who carried on sacred prostitution and were renowned over the whole of the ancient world. With such a goal before one's eyes the little mountain climb up to nearly two thousand feet in the blazing sun was clearly no serious obstacle, and it was downhill going home.

At five o'clock iced tea was served in the American villa and by six the sun was low enough for us to set off on our mountain climb. The crenelated walls at first seemed infinitely remote, but the higher we climbed the less tired we felt. If there is an intoxication of speed there is also one of view, a feeling of freedom and equality with the gods which flows through you when plains and cities, the whole

world of man, lie beneath your feet. Soon the whole vast landscape lay there as though transfigured in the sunset, and our shadows grew on the bare and stony slope until they were as long as two giants'. But above us Acro-Corinthus's walls flamed and gleamed nearer and nearer, with square towers built by French crusaders, Turkish gates and a solid base of huge Cyclopean blocks which Sisyphus and his successors caused to be dragged up. Inside the walls another world began. As late as the 18th century there was still a populous village here and Turkish detachments were quartered in great barracks. Nowadays there is no one living at Acro-Corinthus, and a jumble of gaping house ruins, mosques, barracks, wells and dilapidated Christian chapels sticks up out of the undergrowth of tall, withered grass—a dead, macabre city without a trace of romance. Here we discovered something which we saw nowhere else in Greece: a forgotten minaret, high, narrow and round like a white-washed factory chimney and with a cramped spiral staircase inside, up which I made my way despite a constant fall of stones and Mona's anxious protests. The echo which answered me from the fortress walls around the dead city when I shouted out a parody of "La ilaha illallah" from the top was so hollow and weird that it frightened even me, and I climbed down in silence to the ground past clusters of bats. The walk through the ruins was dangerous, as the majority of the vanished houses had had large underground cisterns for collecting rain water and we stumbled the whole time on black holes in the ground; we let a stone drop into one of them, and it was a long time before a faint splash was heard. But this gloomy city is only a part of the immense area inside Acro-Corinthus's walls. We climbed up to the highest part, where Aphrodite's Temple once stood but where now only a few ashlar and fallen columns provide a convenient seat for those who want to admire the view. We strained our eyes in vain for Athens and the Parthenon, which can be seen from up here on clear days, but the famous clear air of Greece is replaced during the summer months by a sun haze which

greatly restricts visibility. Instead, the Isthmus of Corinth and the canal were beneath our feet like a map, and we easily made out Isthmia's harbor where *Daphne* was lying. Then we examined the temple ruins with the help of a handbook lent by Professor Weinberg. But what was this? American research has ruthlessly disclosed that Aphrodite's Temple was indeed up here, but that the fair priestesses carried on their activities in the lower city! Another illusion lost—and faced with the risk of further denials we dared not read what the Americans have disclosed about the Fountain of Peirene close by, a limpid spring which, in palpable defiance of natural laws, gushes forth at the spot where Pegasus struck his hoofs on the ground when Bellerophon went to seize him. We clambered down an iron ladder to the underground room where the spring flows out under an arched concrete roof built as far back as the 3rd century B.C., an interesting document in the history of building technique. Down in the semidarkness the following conversation took place:

"You don't mean you're going to drink that disgusting water?"

"It's as clear as crystal, as well as being a source of inspiration recognized by several authorities, seeing that Pegasus himself . . ."

"Nonsense! It's nothing but a source of infection and I can tell you this much, I am not going to nurse you when you get ill."

Alas, there was no communion with Pegasus at the Fountain of Peirene, which perhaps explains why this account is so prosaic. When we got outside the sun had set and we had to wait a whole hour beside a Turkish barracks until the moon rose, as we did not dare to pick our way through the dead city with all its perilous holes in the dark. It took another hour to climb down from AcroCorinthus to the archeologists' villa, where they were already a little anxious about us. Our Lambretta soon whisked us home to the *Daphne* and our waiting bunks after this expedition, the last we made from the little harbor of Isthmia.

## ATTIC DAYS

ZEPHYRUS HIMSELF, the gentle west wind, blew us out on to the gulf, clear in the morning air, where Salamis and Aegina floated like blue hills against the light. Small, crisp waves followed us from the stone-pine coast where Isthmia's sacred precincts once lay; the sails swelled out and the water bubbled round the bows. We were already discussing whether we should go on to Athens that evening, after a short visit to Aegina, or not steer toward the mainland until the following day; but we had greatly overestimated our friend Zephyrus' power. His dominion extended no farther than across the little bay at Isthmia, and out in the gulf Pan reigned supreme with breathless sunshine and mirrored timelessness. All day long we lay adrift in the quivering sun with slack sails and all the awnings up. Now and then a puff of wind would send us forward and time and again a steamer passed far off and rocked us in its wash. After all the rushing about ashore this was paradise. We had several swims and in the afternoon, as we lay off the cliffs of Salamis, the skipper read aloud the whole of Aeschylus' *The Persians*, with the description of the great sea battle:

An isle there is, in Salaminian seas,  
Small, of ill anchorage, where none may dwell  
Save Pan the dancer by the soft sea swell . . .

Not till the wild white horses of the Morn  
Took all the earth with glory; then was borne  
A sound across the sea, a voice, a strong  
Clamor exultant like a leaping song,

And Echo answering from the island rock  
Cried "Battle." \*

Our intention was to seek shelter for the night beneath the Aphaea temple of Aegina on the east side of the island, but we met a heavy swell from the Cyclades and anchored instead at sunset below the open north coast close to a little whitewashed church in the shade of some trees. There was not a soul to be seen, only a few fields and, farther away, the roofs of a village. On the other side of the wide gulf to the north was Athens, but the smoke from factories and steamers formed an impenetrable haze over the city. We had no definite feeling of being near a big modern city until the quick fall of darkness, when the lights flared up in the distance.

There was no point in going ashore in the dark, so we went to bed early after a good dinner. We had a calm night, except for an occasional cradling from the wash of distant steamers, and when Attica's mountains emerged against the flushed morning sky to the east we weighed anchor. The sea was still like a mirror and we went by engine along the coast through a whole series of scent-belts which had floated out from land during the night: the smell of sheep and stagnant salt marshes, wood smoke from the village chimneys and dense patches of the scent of resin from the pinewoods covering the greater part of Aegina. We rounded the northeast point, Cape Turlo, just as the first rays of the sun struck the rugged columns of the Aphaea temple up on the ridge. Hagia Marina's little bay, where we had anchored, lay like the fulfillment of all our Greek dreams. It was skirted with stone pines, which grew right down to the water's edge; it was full of bird song, and was crowned by the temple half hidden among the pines. The place was deserted except for two or three tumbledown houses in the shelter of a point. One of them turned out to be a café, whose go-ahead proprietress seemed quite used to tourists from Athens. The sight of a yacht had sent her hopes soaring and when we rowed ashore in the dinghy she met us with

\* Gilbert Murray's translation.

two ready-saddled donkeys, over which she had spread her finest bedcovers. How can one dash hopes like these? We would much rather have gone for a walk up the mountain in the fresh morning air, but it certainly had its charm to sit on purple cushions like two holy kings and be borne up the stony, winding path by the wise animals; fortunately they knew the way, as we had only a hazy sense of direction in the pinewood and it would probably have taken us a long time to find the temple, which was lost to view as soon as we stepped ashore. Suddenly there it was, perhaps not so remarkable in itself after the sale and removal to Munich in 1812 of its wonderful sculptures, but outstanding thanks to its position. The Greeks did not place their temples as focal points in a city vista or as effective scenery out in the countryside presumably because, for them, the temple was not primarily intended for the people but was the god's dwelling. The Aphaea temple, like the majority of ancient temples, lies exactly as a modern architect would place a villa: subordinate, not dominating the landscape, among trees, but with a view toward the islands of the Cyclades in the south and toward the gulf with far-off Athens in the north, as intimate as a garden but with the white sea foam glistening against the cliffs.

Our donkeys evidently knew not only the way but also the normal visiting hours for tourists, for after half an hour they began braying in an unseemly manner, and when a whole column of tourists approached a moment later along the newly made road from the town of Aegina on the other side of the island, we beat a retreat. During our ride back we noticed that many of the pines had deep scores in the bark, running down into concave stones for collecting the resin, this obviously being the way the peasants get resin to flavor their wine. The owner of the donkeys received us with coffee and spring water which she claimed to have fetched from the other side of the bay—all this to put us in an indulgent frame of mind at the moment of reckoning. From some fishermen who came ashore with their glistening morning catch we bought a few handfuls of

finger-sized fish, which are delicious fried uncleaned in oil. We spent the rest of the morning on board bathing, lying under the awning, reading and doing household chores, incapable of tearing ourselves away from the Arcadian bay.

Not until the afternoon, when we had had our siesta and a gentle sun breeze had sprung up from the south, could we bring ourselves to start on the short run to Piraeus. The halfhearted wind only occasionally filled our sails and the flowing mainsheet dragged for the most part in the indolent waves. Visibility out toward the Cyclades was good, but a light heat haze lay over the coast and made it difficult to decide in the glasses which was the yacht harbor in the conglomeration of houses that gradually emerged. It was then, quite unaware, that I caught sight of something white gleaming farther inland, pillars and a three-cornered fronton up on a hill. Was it possible? The chart and the compass left no doubt: it was the Parthenon and the Acropolis, not pictures or photographs any longer, but earthly things, receiving the same share of sun, cloud shadows, threats of war and hurrying minutes as ourselves.

The most striking quality of anything extraordinary is its naturalness. "He was so natural," we say spontaneously after meeting one of the world's great men. Our reaction is the same when other kinds of wonders—religious, artistic, scientific—come within the immediate orbit of our knowledge. We are used to meeting the extraordinary only in the semireality of pictures, to knowing Christ as a statue, the Bikini explosion as a photograph, death as a concept. But to meet Goethe personally and find out that he is a man like all other men—who blows his nose, speaks of the weather, lives in an ordinary house, in short, is natural—is an experience which reminds us with a shock that wonders, too, are part of reality, with all the consequences this entails. Something similar can be said of the Parthenon, although fortunately it is much simpler to experience its naturalness: a journey is all that is necessary.

The yachtsman has a great advantage over the traveler who ap-

proaches Athens on the deck of a steamer: he gets his first impression of Greece's capital from a little shell-shaped bay surrounded by villas, fish restaurants and the ultra-modern clubhouse of the Royal Greek Yacht Club out on the point, and not from the grimy, stinking and wretched Piraeus. Mounichia's idyllic harbor between the Piraeus and Phaleron was a galley base in ancient times but was then used solely by fishermen for more than a thousand years. Nowadays it is reserved for yachts and motorboats, which in impressive numbers reflect their white hulls in the water. *Daphne* was expected, as I had written the previous winter to the yacht club's secretary for information regarding the voyage we were planning, and he met us now on the quay with a large bundle of longed-for mail in his hand and the most elegantly phrased words of welcome on his lips. We were shown to an excellent anchorage next to his Majesty the King's surprisingly unpretentious motor yacht, and after we had made fast and got the awning up I found, to my immense satisfaction, that I could lie on *Daphne's* deck and study the Parthenon's divine geometry between the rigging of the other boats. Otherwise, Athens appeared merely as a muddle of roofs, which from the shore of the Gulf of Phaleron slowly rose inland, with the Acropolis and Lycabettos like two islands above the sea of houses against a background of distant mountains.

Early next morning we lifted the Lambretta ashore and drove straight off to the Acropolis. The sun was still low as, hesitant as two unbidden guests, we stopped between the columns of the Propylaea before this temple, which lay there with the light behind it like a cool and airy silhouette, against which the rock base, lacerated but worn smooth by millions of footsteps, rose slowly like a gleaming pathway made by the sun. We had seen many ancient temples during our voyage: Paestum, Olympia, Delphi and Aegina, all very dissimilar but with one feature in common: they are dominated by their landscape, by the plain, the wood, the mountains, the sea. The Parthenon alone dominates. It dominates the whole



of the Athenian Plain, but chiefly the Acropolis, whose plateau becomes a restricted sanctuary, invaded by nothing irrelevant, with the Erechtheum and the Propylaea as supporting elements, a sanctuary which, instead of shutting out the world like the Christian ones, encloses it, but is nevertheless on a higher plane than the sea of houses and the human life at the foot of the hill. We returned almost every day to the Acropolis during the two weeks *Daphne* lay in Mounichia. The lighting is perhaps best in the morning, but after an exhausting day in stuffy museums and in teeming streets the temptation to rest in the marble coolness up here, to watch the sunset sky turn opal blue behind the columns of the Parthenon and the shadows lengthen over Athens, often induced us to make an extra trip up here on our faithful Lambretta, which we had never blessed as much as during those days. There was time for much meditation in the Parthenon's shadow after the first rapture had subsided, *inter alia* the question of the disrepute of classic art.

It can hardly be denied that the Parthenon, Praxiteles and Venus de Milo are, for an increasing number of people, in process of becoming the quintessence of all that is dead, banal and uninteresting in art. Why? Why are the bulls of Lascaux more alive to almost any modern artist than Pheidias' horses, why are the pillar-prophets of Chartres more convincing than the caryatids of the Erechtheum and how is it that the Negro gods from Africa have become greater potentates than Zeus? Everything indicates that the development which caused an earlier generation to turn away from Laocoön and Apollo di Belvedere, once so much admired, to 5th century art, is now abandoning "the classicism of the golden age" in favor of an increasingly archaic sculpture, which in its turn leads on to Mycenaean vase paintings and Helladic idols. It is a revaluation which concerns not only art but also the very core of the Greek conception of life, its humanism. Not since the Middle Ages, in fact, have the Greeks been in such disfavor as in these latter days.

The causes of this "dehellenizing" of our cultural consciousness

are no doubt many and deep rooted, but standing up here on the Acropolis the thought strikes one that it must be a pure mistake and that the Greeks we repudiate are not the real Greeks. From the 19th century we have inherited the idea that art, in a direct or indirect sense, is a reflection of life, and our own art largely fulfills this condition: it reflects personalities, expresses the spirit of the age, represents class consciousness, analyzes psychological or other truth. But Greek art cannot be regarded from this angle without the results being either an unconscious falsification of the Greeks themselves or else a disparagement of their art.

Our grandparents for the most part chose the former alternative: on the basis of the "ideal" Greek art they evolved an equally ideal human race. Divinely gifted 19th century Greeks—happy beings who united the natural open air existence of the simple savage with the solving of Euclidean problems in the sand on the beach! With pebbles in your mouths you made perfectly phrased speeches on liberty, patriotism, democracy and you revealed your noble genius by making profound mythological anecdotes out of religion, marble statues out of your athletic contests and plays out of your mental conflicts.

It is a pity, though, that whoever sees the foot-high tunnels in the Laurion silver mines left by your practical but quickly exhausted boring machines, small slave children, loses some of his admiration for the much-lauded Athenian democracy. A pity that sober historians have confirmed that the Athenian hosts lost only 193 men (including the prostrate runner) in the skirmish usually known as the Battle of Marathon. A pity altogether that a critical age has discovered that the lives of individuals and communities alike have, in their essentials, always been just as problematical, impure and hampered by elementary difficulties, and that there has never been such a thing as a golden age. Against this background, the commentary on life given us by Greek art is, to say the least, sketchy and comes perilously near the really false academic art which was

the official mask of the middle class during the last century.

But if the luscious Venuses and the sleek Hermes statues were for this reason spurned at a comparatively early stage, there did remain works which still had claim to unstinted admiration. As long as people believed in reason and spiritual progress they acknowledged that Greek art specialized in one thing which none could excel: the portrayal of the highest adventures of the intellect. It is this last bastion which is falling, now that people have begun to doubt the possibility of a clearsighted and exalted intellectual life, just as they previously ceased to believe in an ideal material existence. Experience indicates, in fact, that even in this respect man is doomed to impurity, dubious dependence and innate weakness—something which is proved by a sufficiently thorough survey of the intellectual lives of so-called great men. It is plain, therefore, that the Greeks whose mental life is supposed to be faithfully typified by classical art have never existed, and faced with this more or less clearly conceived dishonesty modern man turns to other sources, to an art which frankly expresses man's position in a world dominated by dark forces and the misery of existence.

But, it may be objected, classical art at least retains its beauty, its aesthetic qualities. Unfortunately, one is tempted to say. For it is this very faculty of appealing to one's sense of beauty that has become one of the arguments weighing most heavily against classicism. What profit in the form of refinement of the soul and nobility of mental outlook our grandparents expected from the aesthetic communion with the Parthenon! Artistic feeling was, for them, the way to classicism, and when they managed to hoist themselves up to a lyrical pitch of grace they almost believed themselves to be Greeks. Innumerable poems written by poets of an older generation on Greek themes are triumphant words uttered from the pinnacle of ecstasy. It was a long time before respect for such a state—which carried no obligations with it—began to wane. Neither the lives—failures almost without exception—of the lyric poets nor the sight

of all the "Victory of Samothrace" small-scale plaster models on the mantelpieces of the stuffy homes of the 1880s, sad witnesses of so much Strindbergian family hatred and moral depravity, could expose the impotence of art's idols. It was only the Mozart-playing commandants of the concentration camps and the art-collecting dictators of the second world war who managed to convince people in general of how little man himself is involved in an aesthetic experience, how worthless is the rapture which allows every villain to weep with emotion or feel himself reborn, absolved—and ready the next instant to commit any atrocity at all.

Aesthetic beauty, therefore, cannot save classical art. But perhaps another kind of beauty can. Beauty can be experienced in two ways: you can, for instance, look at a delicate still life, listen to a bird singing or admire the Northern Lights, and take joy in the mere fact that anything so beautiful exists—the true "objective" aesthetic experience; or you can meet a *challenging beauty*, something which involves you and makes you want to alter your life. The Parthenon and all that is living in Greek art belongs to this last category, whose claims on the beholder must not be confused with those of moralizing art. Plato had a conviction which is apt to confuse readers of today because it is so utterly at variance with our own ideas: he held that you can have knowledge only of what you possess, that, for instance, only the virtuous can know what virtue is. The Parthenon says much the same to the modern beholder who is used to understanding and experiencing everything without committing himself: only he who has himself refashioned his personality and really acquired the harmony that the temple exhales can understand it. The fruit of a slowly clarifying thought—which has never pretended to originality but, on the contrary, counts it an honor to be typical—this temple suggests the organic process which allows all proportions, step by step, to attain their perfect harmony through the patient presence of an unbroken effort.

Against the background of this conception that the purpose of

art is to transmute life, the modern idea of art as the mirror of life appears as the expression of a shortsighted engineering mentality. Our parents thought that life was a technical problem which could be solved from without once all the factors were known, when art assembled its enormous wealth of experience, and psychology, sociology, history and the other sciences molded it. We ourselves belong to a less optimistic age, but the fact that art goes on with its work of testimony, dives deep into all sources and frankly displays all that is strange and unheard-of or that reveals the dark fundamental forces, shows that our age—even if it has lost the older generation's faith in a practical solution of life's problems—still believes that existence can be understood and that we can save ourselves by striving toward a point from which everything can be surveyed. Against this sublime Prometheus dream the Parthenon patiently raises the view that life is, above all, to be lived and that the intellectual difficulties—but also victories—are not so much in the world of speculation as in another which we scarcely reckon with because we have postponed it: application. The Greeks preferred to make life of their art; we on the other hand make art of life. That is the cause of the whole misunderstanding and a good deal of the secret which entitles the Greeks, despite all their proven weaknesses, to remain the great masters.

During the whole of our stay in Athens the large American aircraft carrier *Midway* lay out in the Bay of Phaleron. It dozed there in the blazing sun like a giant steel beehive, at any second capable of letting loose whole swarms of the venomous bees that clustered thickly on the deck with uplifted wings; only now and then did an occasional furious one buzz around it. It was almost beyond belief that this was supposed to be a boat, in any case to us, who had sailed close under the monster's high steel coasts on our arrival and every morning since then had found them just as much a solid

part of the landscape as Aegina out at sea or the Acropolis inland. It seemed immovable, this colossus; its only mobile part was the widely extended radar device, which, ever on the alert, revolved up on top of the fire control tower, sensitively testing the surrounding sea of air and registering every rowboat that approached, every bird that wheeled in the vicinity.

Sinbad the Sailor's magnetic island could not have been more mysterious than this floating city and its curious inhabitants. Many of the officers visited the royal yacht club; *Daphne's* crew, as the club's guests, also visited the place daily to telephone, ask for mail or have a shower, and in this way it happened one day in the bar that I felt a hand on my shoulder, and turning around, I saw a young American officer with a rather flushed face.

"Have a drink?" he began, adding a trifle reproachfully: "You've got a fine country, but your gin's lousy."

It was certainly flattering and unexpected for me to be taken for a Greek, but I felt it incumbent to correct the mistake. Without any comment he took out his visiting card. "John B. Jorgensen, Lieutenant Commander, U.S. Navy," it said. We were both Scandinavians, he born of Danish parents who had emigrated before he opened the frank blue eyes which at once showed me a disguised Danish fisherman in this robot of an officer. Jorgensen grew excited: in the first European port he had met people who were almost his parents' countrymen. Straightforwardly and naturally he gave us the best invitation he knew:

"Won't you bring your wife out to dinner on the *Midway*?"

We began our visit up in the glaring hangar below the main deck, as large and high as a city square. There three football matches and two handball matches were going on at the same time on different playing courts, loudspeakers were echoing and people streaming to and fro along galleries high up under the roof or on bridges over the abyss. We went down a companionway into the bowels of the boat, where we found iron doors, lifts, more stairs, wardrooms with

indirect lighting and corridors which constantly divided and branched off, forming a labyrinth more complicated than the Minotaur's own. Everywhere in this city without a sky electric lamps were glaring, pipes and wiring coiled and twisted and machines hummed. Many places had air conditioning, and as you stepped through a door the merciless summer heat of Athens was exchanged as though by magic for a temperature of perhaps 70° F. which felt icy against a body used to higher temperatures for several months. Officers were sitting in soft chairs like cinema seats, dozing, writing letters, reading.

"This is my squadron's orderly room," Jorgensen explained. "We collect here before going out on bombing raids. The squadron commander explains the plan of attack and we have to study maps and photographs."

With its master's desk, its blackboard and its desk in front of every chair, the room resembled a school classroom, and for most of the young airmen it was probably a direct continuation of the former classrooms in secondary schools, technical colleges and training schools—a new class in the school of life with a subject which had evolved so naturally out of the former ones that the difference was barely noticeable. One was used to hypotenuses and parabolas from geometry, and when X in the equations was replaced by a village to be wiped out or a column of troops to be blown up, one floated sufficiently high above reality to forget that the desired quantity was death. There were twenty such classrooms on the *Midway*.

We then went to the officer's mess, where a drink was served before dinner. On the wall there was a large map of Korea with flags stuck in it which had already left holes in most of the surface. One hears a lot about the American joy of life, but the men sunk in the soft armchairs in the *Midway's* mess were not merely serious; they seemed in the depths of gloom. Dinner was served in a series of low rooms whose number and relative positions were impossible

for a stranger to survey. The cooking and waiting was done entirely by Negroes and we were duly impressed both by the number of courses and the number of clean plates, which were changed so quickly that we never had time to finish what was on them. After dinner we took the elevator up to the flight deck, where among hundreds of similar planes we found one with the name "Lt. cdr. J. B. Jorgensen" painted in red letters on the side. To round things off our guide conducted us to the pilots' part of the city, where he asked us to step into his little flat, which would have been an ornament to any American block of flats. We had not been talking for long before Jorgensen opened a drawer in his writing desk and took out a photograph album. In it were mostly pictures of a pretty young woman and a small child in a sunny garden.

"This is my wife and my son. What about us all sending them a postcard!"

And on a postcard of the Acropolis he printed the following: "Darling, here you see the oldest building in Athens. Have met two enviable Scandinavians who sail about in a small boat just as they like. I'm longing for home. Love from John."

A month later we read in a newspaper that the *Midway* had sailed for Korea.

Our stay in Athens had other things to offer besides this peep into the world of the future. Another unexpected combination brought us into equally surprising but more genuine surroundings. A friend of mine in Paris, Nico Mazaraki, was born in Greece but for many years has had a name in the French world of art as a seller of Dufy's and Derain's pictures. When he heard that we were going to Greece he promised us a letter of introduction to a friend of his youth, "a fine, cultivated and wealthy man" by the name of Stavro Costopoulo. As he handed us the letter he said:

"Just two words of advice, bearing in mind the dangers which the uninitiated can run into in Greece. First: don't meddle in Greek politics, for the Greeks themselves hardly know what it's all about.



And secondly: don't let overhospitable Greeks take charge of you so that you lose your freedom."

How was the worthy Mazaraki to know that his letter would force us to break both these golden rules! An ironic fate had caused a reshuffle of the Greek government during the weeks that elapsed between our Paris and Athens visits. When we asked the secretary at the Greek Yacht Club if he knew a certain Stavro Costopoulo we were told:

"But he's our present minister of shipping!"

Costopoulo was indeed a minister, but he was at the same time a real Greek, for whom a letter of introduction is a letter of introduction regardless of all external circumstances. But there was one difficulty in the way of his readiness to look after us: his full daily program. The only chance was simply to take us along to receptions and ceremonies. The very first evening we found ourselves at a political banquet together with the greater part of the government, the second day at a launching at a state shipyard and the third day on a car trip to Marathon, where something or other was to be inspected. Costopoulo had a very charming wife called Danaë and a daughter, Daphne. It is always satisfying to see the right people in the right place, and where the Costopoulo family was concerned, one felt quite sure that no one could have fulfilled their duties better. Being with the head of the family every day, both in private and on more official occasions, confirmed our original impression of authority, calm, intelligence and blameless character. Mrs. Danaë was more of a society woman of fashion, childishly amused by making fun of the countrified minister of agriculture or the narrow-minded Portuguese chargé d'affaires who took her in to dinner, but she was so enchanting and had such a sunny smile that even her victims joined in the laugh. What struck us most during these days of social life in Athens was the utterly unforced, perhaps a trifle naive tone and the simple habits which seemed a matter of course. No luxury cars and Hollywood villas, no snobbery and

jargon, no insurmountable barriers between the people and the rulers. The ministry of shipping, where we often called for Costopoulos, was housed in an ordinary old block of flats with dark, narrow stairs. His home had more the air of a university professor's than an industrialist's (which he was, however). When we went for a Sunday outing fourteen of us, including cousins and aunts, squeezed into two small cars and drove to a beach on the Euboea Straits, where, like hundreds of others, we undressed in the bushes and drank iced tea out of thermos bottles on the beach. It was only with great difficulty that we got a seat later in the evening at an overfull restaurant outside the city, where we were squashed together with dozens of strangers at the long tables and where the minister had a long political conversation with the waiter, who finally promised to vote for his party at the next election.

The occasion we most enjoyed, however, was a large banquet at an open-air restaurant in the suburb of Kiphisia. The president of the Greek Butchers' Federation invited the big wigs of the Venizelos party (among them ourselves) to a terrific spread to celebrate the expected change of government, which sure enough took place some weeks later when General Plastiras handed over the post of prime minister to Venizelos; Costopoulos advanced to that of minister for trade and other members of the party got into the government. President Venizelos took Danaë in to dinner and seemed, quite candidly, rather mediocre despite his praiseworthy efforts to uphold his great father's name; he sat tense, glared around him, discussed Sweden's neutrality and Finland's situation intelligently. However, one suddenly had the strange feeling of talking to a young man who would have been better cut out for a happy-go-lucky officer or a country squire than for a political leader of a war-ravaged land like Greece, caught up in the game of power politics.

The host of the evening, the butchers' president, was an incredible character. Thanks to the shortage of meat during the war and the dizzy height of food prices, he had risen in a short time from

a very humble position to a V.I.P. rolling in money, with a Rolls Royce and political aspirations. We never really found out what he hoped to gain from the new government, but it must have been something important, as no effort was spared to reach hearts and consciences through the stomach. An unbroken stream of national Greek dishes, pastries, wines, fruits and sweetmeats flowed round the table, while a waning moon, like an eloquent symbol of the Plastiras government's numbered days, looked down through the tree tops in astonishment. There were countless speeches and the butcher-host, on learning that Mona and I had no children, entreated us earnestly with tears in his eyes to lose no time in thinking of the perpetuation of the race and promised to come up to Stockholm in person to act as the child's godfather—a statement which was translated literally into French by the minister of education. The more vital questions, however, were dealt with in private by men who suddenly gave each other a nod, got up and carried on long and whispered negotiations a little farther away in the dark, their heads close together. I shall not pretend that we heard the strokes of history's wings round us on this evening, but we did hear, all the more plainly, the buzz of politics' flies.

The Greeks are not snobs in the same way as, for instance, the Italians. The historical basis for recognized social distinctions is lacking, too. There is no native nobility, no princes of the church in keeping with the Catholic hierarchy; at most a small shipowners' society, which, however, has no tradition in the capital. It should not be forgotten that the Greeks, until a century and a half ago, had no legal rights and were in bondage to the country's masters, the Turks. This is not equally noticeable everywhere. While the rural Greece of the peasants and farmers lived its simple life more or less undisturbed by the invaders, the Turkish influence was strongest in the towns, where a middle class of a Levantine type, traders and handicraftsmen, developed, but no officers', civil servants' or intellectual class. The backbone of the country and the

leading class is still the farmers, therefore, with their solid traditions. Just as Denmark has become a society with a uniform middle class face, in Greece the farmer's view of life and ethos is the ground on which all meet and form one big family—it is all the same whether you are a shoemaker in Piraeus or have made a fabulous fortune in Constantinople, Alexandria or the U.S.A.

But if no Greek is a *grand seigneur* to other Greeks, he recognizes all the more uncritically a superior person in the foreigner. For the last two thousand years the Greeks have either been ruled against their will by foreign princes or—during the last one hundred and thirty years—themselves called in one foreign prince after the other to be *basileos*, king, in Greece. You get some idea of this mentality when you discover that “tourist” in Greek is *lordos*, with all the expectations it implies in the matter of generosity and wealth. If the Greeks are not snobs on their own account, they certainly are on their foreign guests' behalf. We realized the very first day in Athens that a foreigner who does not want to disappoint his acquaintances and friends just *has* to stay at the Hotel Grande Bretagne opposite the palace, where the rooms cost about twenty-five dollars a day. Luckily we had an excuse which was always accepted with an expression of grateful relief:

“Monsieur and Madame Schildt are not staying at the Grande Bretagne, they prefer living on board their own yacht,” Danaë explained to the surprised President Venizelos. “Oh, that's all right then.” They quite understood our reluctance to transfer our precious personages to a Greek hotel—even if it did happen to be one of the most luxurious in Europe. A foreign bed is, so to speak, *a priori* better than a Greek one.

This superstitious faith in everything foreign finds expression in many ways. Our Lambretta was admired excessively wherever we went, and every day there was someone who wanted to buy it for any price at all. We were also waited upon by people who insisted on buying the *Daphne*. The yacht harbor at Mounichia is full of

foreign boats—Breton fishing cutters, worn-out English racers, mysterious steel boats built by German inventive geniuses—for the minute a romantic foreigner has realized his dream of sailing to Greece on his own keel, he receives such dazzling offers for his leaky old craft, simply because it is foreign, that he goes home by steamer, glad and content. Athens' yacht harbor is a veritable graveyard of adventures, where one discarded hull after the other enjoys its well-earned rest. Only three or four honest caiques or fishing boats converted to yachts show that there are, nevertheless, some Greeks who hold that the country has its own type of boat which is a hundred times better suited for sailing in these stormy waters than dilapidated English racers. Or perhaps their owners had been slow off the mark and not got hold of one of the coveted "real yachts"?

Without the Lambretta our existence during our stay would have been well-nigh intolerable. To get from Mounichia to Athens those having no conveyance of their own must first walk a long way in a temperature of 105° F., wait for a crowded bus and then change at Phaleron for a still more crowded train. Bodily hygiene is not especially good in a city where there is hardly enough drinking water, and the atmosphere in busses and trains is in keeping. Mona went into town one morning in this way, as I had to settle a number of formalities in Piraeus, but her experiences during the one and a half hour journey before she reached a station on the outskirts of Athens half dead with heat, foul air and the crush, were such that she never again deserted the Lambretta. Every morning, fanned by cool breezes, we spun along the fine *autostrada*, reaching the city in a quarter of an hour. The mornings were usually devoted to study in the museums, both the National Museum, where fortunately five rooms had been opened with a temporary exhibition of the most costly treasures; the splendid Byzantine museum with sculptures and ikons; and the well-tended local arts and crafts museum, created by the wealthy merchant Benachi, an old man with a waxed mustache whom we had the pleasure of meeting. At noon, when the

heat was unbearable, we would ride back to the sea along the *autostrada*, where I soon got to know every pot-hole, every dusty tree, every dreary café. The only unpredictable thing on this road was the stink from the large sewer which had been under repair for years and which spread a veritable veil of poison gas across the beach of the Gulf of Phaléron. It began abruptly like a wall, sometimes by the railway station, sometimes a few hundred yards farther on. We noticed that the less diffused the smell, the hotter the day—due no doubt to the faintness of the sea breeze. During the whole of our stay in Athens there was only a very light breeze and it was hot accordingly, but our Athenian friends assured us that even so it was better than when the meltemia enshrouds the whole city in dust.

Athens and Piraeus are, administratively, two separate cities and are about six miles apart, but the vast expansion which has assembled almost the whole of the country's economic life in this one place and caused buildings to multiply since the 1920s, has, in practice, amalgamated the two cities into one. Piraeus is now an ugly, dirty and depressing port within the capital, with tall bank buildings and shops nearest the docks and, farther up, mile-long bazaar streets smelling and looking like a gigantic market hall with such a plenitude of goods spread out on view that the unreflecting would see in them a sign of abnormal national prosperity. By comparison it is salutary to imagine what it would look like if all the shopkeepers in Stockholm were to hang, stack and spread their entire stock out in the street in front of the shops.

On the way home to *Daphne* we often used to stop at Antonios Kristodoulaki's shop with the laudable intention of supporting a kindred soul. Antonios had had a university education and taught French and Ancient Greek every day in the co-educational school at Piraeus. *Katigitis gallikon* was printed on the elegant visiting card he handed us the first time we were shown into the shop by some schoolchildren. A schoolteacher's salary is enough to buy little

more than a lettuce a day in postwar Greece, and so Antonios had opened this unpretentious little shop, where, with the help of his entire family, he sold groceries, fruit, oil, wine, ice and hundreds of other useful things. Business flourished from six in the morning until eleven at night, Antonios corrected the schoolchildren's homework among melons and tomatoes, and apart from his daily lessons he left the shop only for the brief hours of the night, which the family spent in a bedroom on the first floor.

"I'm afraid I have no *arrière-boutique* spoken of by Montaigne," Antonios deplored, "and God knows I would rather sell books and engravings in the Quartier Latin. It all depends where you are: here, ice is the most important article, but I couldn't very well sell that in Scandinavia. What do you think I could sell there to support my family?"

"Sun would be about the best thing, but until we've learnt how to bottle it we can make do with travel books from sunny climes. That's my little solution," I confided to Antonios.

"Yes, I expect we all have the illusion that everything might be better if we were somewhere else. As Baudelaire says: *Là, tout n'est qu'ordre et beauté, luxe, calme et volupté*. We Greeks are very apt to think that order, calm, beauty and wealth are to be found elsewhere, but I assure you that Greece in the 1930s was very near paradise. Wages were enough to make ends meet and life was so easy, *la vie était si facile*. . . ."

He stared with tired eyes at his rotting fruit, the melting ice, the people passing by. It was not quite what he had thought when he was young and studied French literature at the Sorbonne. But why complain when so many were worse off. Taking a bottle out of a cupboard, he said:

"Now I want you to taste a wine twenty years old. I don't sell it, I keep it for my friends."

We left Antonios' shop laden with provisions and went on down to the harbor in the blazing noonday heat. Mona got lunch ready

while I washed down the deck, and after our meal we stretched out under the awning on the roof of the cabin. The heat shimmered all round us, the Acropolis had nearly faded out in the sun haze and there was not a living soul to be seen. But a delightful sea breeze began to caress us and we sank into a dreamless nirvana for an hour or two. Not until about half past four was the temperature bearable again and we started off on a new expedition ashore. Athens has much to offer, from the new excavations of the ancient agora quarter to the modern stadium, but what we enjoyed most was just sauntering about the streets, which become crooked and full of ruts as soon as you leave the big asphalted main thoroughfares. One moment you come upon ancient relics like the Tower of the Winds or the elegant Lysicrates monument, the next upon churches from the time when Athens was a Byzantine provincial town and the touching little cathedral was pieced together from old fragments on a space of twenty-five feet by forty. The quarter below the Acropolis is a village pure and simple, where cocks crow vaingloriously on the refuse heaps and the rickety houses hardly reach above your head.

We also made outings in the surroundings: to the Byzantine abbeys of Kaisariani and Daphni, both well worth seeing, and to Eleusis, scene of the sacred mysteries, now a dreary industrial suburb. Athens kept us more than busy both morning and afternoon during the two weeks we were there. But only in the evenings, when the coolness of night came like a longed-for deliverer, did the city really come alive: we would sit for hours on the café terraces talking to newly acquired Greek friends; social life blossomed out, and a surprising number of lovely women would appear after lying all day long in shuttered rooms anxiously protecting their pale complexion from every ray of sun.

Two days before we left I had a slight mishap. We drove down to the necropolis at Kerameikos, the ancient burial road in the western part of the city, where, although the pick of the tomb-



stones have been removed to the National Museum, there are still enough monuments left to give an idea—better than Aliscamps at Arles and the Via Appia in Rome—of what the ancient tomb-lined roads out of the cities looked like. The area is closed off and the only way in is past a small caretaker's cottage. As we walked in through the gate half an hour before closing time we were met by two yelping dogs. They were by no means monsters comparable with the sheepdogs which are the terror of the Greek countryside, but I kept a wary eye on them and stood stock-still while they pranced around my feet. I happened to be wearing a brand-new gaberdine suit in honor of the select company we were keeping, a real snob outfit which Mona had talked me into having made and had packed for the journey. It must have been made of very fine, thin material as, before I knew what had happened, one of the dogs had grazed a trouser leg with a sharp fang and there I stood bared to the hips. Even the animal seemed appalled at the result and at that moment a woman in a salmon-colored petticoat and with curl papers in her hair appeared at the door of the cottage. It was a great pity that the wretched dogs were the only ones to see the pantomime which was now enacted. Both parties abstained from all words at the outset, each realizing that the other would not understand a verbal argument. I began the performance with a double pirouette to show the extent of the damage and Mona pointed to the dog with an accusing finger and up to heaven as our witness. Madame made one or two swift gestures of incredulous surprise with her head and arms, but then gave up and showed us instead, by means of a graphic pantomime, how the guilty animal would be put to death by way of atonement. We shook our heads vigorously and imitated a policeman instead. This really set the old girl off; she danced the dances of poverty and prison in quick succession, expressing vividly her husband's rage and the children's tears. At last she seized the torn trouser leg, pressed it against my thigh and started chanting in a monotone, like an incantation, the word *rafti, rafti, rafti*. Did

she hope that this would make the cloth grow together again? Suddenly it dawned on me that *rafti* must have something to do with the sign we had seen in our very first Greek port and subsequently found all over the country on walls and gables: *Raptomikani Singer*, Singer sewing machine. *Rafti* was evidently "sew" or "tailor." We nodded graciously, but the stitchery could not be done in a trice. The woman went off to get a pair of her husband's working-trousers; we gave them one look and felt obliged to decline her kind offer.

"I'll drive home in my underpants, there's no help for it," I told Mona, who looked rather doubtful. "It'll be dark in an hour, we'll drive like Jehu and people will think I've got shorts on."

And so it was. The woman took the trousers, we solemnly repeated *avriou*, tomorrow, and *ora tesseras*, four o'clock, and then tried to put ourselves in a philosophic frame of mind and regard the ruined suit historically by walking about among the tombs as the sun went down. We saw Eukolinea, a little girl holding a bird in her hand while her mother and grandmother stand one on either side and take farewell of her, we saw the young Dexileos on horseback riding over a fallen enemy. Then we sat down under some cypresses and waited until it grew dark. When we could no longer see the Acropolis over the roof tops we set off. All went according to plan. We drove rapidly along Euripides Street, passed the Ministry of Finance and came out into University Street where the National Library, the University and the Academy show how the 19th century imagined the ancient temple: these buildings look as though they had been taken direct from an old German history of art with xylographic reconstructions. As we reached the intersection between the Hotel Grande Bretagne and the Royal Palace it happened. At this busy spot there is a traffic policeman, who lifted his white baton just as we were about to pass the café terrace at full speed. There we sat, easily recognizable to all our acquaintances sipping their *apéritifs* on the terrace. No one called out to us, for the Greek has a marked sense of dignity. After two hundred agonizing

seconds the policeman waved us on and we dived again into the merciful night after our debut in farce.

And so our last day in Athens arrived, the day when we drove round saying good-by to everything, both alive and dead, that we had done our best to get to know. We now discovered, to our surprise, that we had got rather fond of it all. The Acropolis chiefly, which had watched over our anchorage and been our daily lookout point, and our friends, from the Costopoulo family to the French schoolteacher in Piraeus. It was also hard to part from Athens itself, this mixture of musical-comedy capital and august seat of learning; the city where, on warm summer nights, men with waxed mustaches roll their eyes and talk politics while high above the street cafés and alleyways the Parthenon gleams in the moonlight; the provincial city where everyone knows everyone else and the hostess plays the piano for the guests after the society dinner; where learned men from all the western lands impart a cosmopolitan air to the local atmosphere with their institutes and schools of archeology, and where a few millionaires give a tinge of the Arabian Nights to confined bourgeois circles. Athens is a city to which you want to return and where it would be pleasant to live for a whole long winter and really get inside coteries and drawing rooms, meet the great poet X at Madame Y's, go to the shipowner Z's annual ball, drive out to the new excavations at Thebes with Professor A, discuss Plato during an outing to Cape Sounion with B, the Cambridge student, or even go with that awfully nice tradesman C and his family on a week-end trip to their lovely old house on the island of Hydra. All this was just beginning to unfold when we had to leave. We would have done so with greater regret had not our real goal, the Cyclades, been waiting for us, the white islands in the wine-red sea where Theseus' black sail disappeared and where, even to this day, the intrepid sailor still meets with adventure.

## MEETING WITH THE MELTEMIA

THE START FROM Athens was more of a nuisance than usual, as zealous officials exacted the same formalities from us as from the large merchantmen at Piraeus. *Daphne's* crew had to line up before a half-blind old doctor and say ninety-nine, whereupon he wrote out a certificate that we were free of scurvy, cholera and yellow fever. Another authority in another part of the town certified, upon receipt of the usual stamp duty, that "no abnormal mortality among the ship's rats had been observed" and the customs, equally clairvoyant, gave us our clearance from their office. At last, about one o'clock on August 10th, we steered by engine out on to the glassy Bay of Phaleron. Some distance out we met a light sun-breeze and stopped the engine. As always, it was a great relief to be on our way again—as though returning to a welcoming home after all the tearing about, the disjointedness and heat in port. One's ever-pricking conscience about all that ought to be seen and done can also rest: one's only occupation is sailing and one can therefore lie unoccupied on deck without a care in the world.

Slowly but inexorably the Acropolis was swallowed up by the heat haze—soon we saw the white temples only because we knew they were there, soon we saw them only in our memory. The coast we were following is rather low lying and is littered with unsightly buildings; here is Athens' airport, surrounded by the roar of heavy passenger planes from Stockholm, Bombay and Cape Town. But beyond the Lombarda peninsula the Attic farming land begins and you no longer meet the leaky rowboats and mysterious motorboats, knocked together by garage mechanics, which convey the more

enterprising citizens of Piræus, as of all modern ports, out to their angling paradise. Instead, we caught glimpses of white villages in the midst of fertile fields, and small boys, used to the sea and agog with curiosity, rowed out to wave to us. The distance from Mounichia to Cape Sounion is twenty-six nautical miles and when the faint breeze went down with the sun we again had to have recourse to the engine. It was nearly dark when we steered into the little bay below Sounion's Poseidon Temple and let go the anchor in the glossy water. For thousands of years ships have lain in this harbor below Attica's narrow south cape, waiting for a favorable wind in order to sail out on to the Aegean Sea—either north to the Dardanelles, east across the sea to Asia Minor or southeast to Delos, the Cyclades and Crete. It was therefore only natural that a sacrificial temple to the sea god was built on the point—by reason of its position the most dramatic temple in Greece; the surprising thing is that part of it is still standing, twelve columns which we sensed rather than saw in the darkness. There were no other boats in sight, but a solitary light gleamed from the land. We did not bother to go ashore, however, reveling instead in a quiet evening at home and going to bed early after a good dinner.

It was all the more dazzling when we popped our heads out of the hatchway at six o'clock next morning and saw the temple up on the bare point, a silhouette still dark against the dawn sky, while the hills on the other side of the bay were reflected in the clear water. After an invigorating swim and a cup of coffee, we rowed ashore to a hut at the head of the bay, evidently a simple restaurant for Athenians on their Sunday outings. From there we climbed up winding sheep tracks through knee-high undergrowth to the temple plateau with its ruin—"lifted like a lyre against the archipelago," to quote the Swedish poet Hjalmar Gullberg's simile. Behind the corroded temple columns, the Aegean Sea lay bright blue in the morning light, with the islands which were our goal sailing on it like distant icebergs. Never have I looked forward to

a cruise with such pleasure as on this morning, and seldom have I had less foreboding of the hardships of the evening.

The unchangingly calm weather ever since we had left Isthmia had almost made us forget what the English yacht *Korby's* crew had told us about the meltemia, and in Athens we had listened with only half an ear to the explanations of our Greek friends that the calm was abnormal in August and that the Aegean Sea at this time of year is usually whipped to sunlit foam by the wild north wind. Our luck might very well hold for another two days so that we could get to Tinos, the most northerly point on our Aegean route. Then the meltemia could blow if it liked—it only meant a following wind for us.

About eight o'clock in the morning we noticed, from the temple terrace of Sounion, a black line above the sea to the north. It gradually spread, and after an hour the dark zone had reached us: it was a north wind, but no terrifying storm, only a good stiff sailing breeze. Full of impatience to be off we hurried down to the dinghy, a haste which we did not regret. As we pulled out, half rowing, half drifting in the violent gusts, we noticed that *Daphne* was dragging her anchor. Soon the anchor chain was hanging plumb down and we did not catch up with our boat until it had got well outside the bay on the open sea. This was no time to be wise after the event and wonder what would have happened if . . . The dinghy was hauled swiftly on board and lashed to the afterdeck, and the mainsail was shortened for safety's sake. Soon *Daphne*, close hauled, was cutting through the foaming waves below the temple terrace, where not long before we had stood gazing out over the glassy calm. Now everything was a glittering sailor's paradise; the sea billowed, the wind sang and our hearts with it.

The nearest island is called Makronissos. We had heard that "a re-education camp" had been set up there for communist soldiers taken prisoner in the recent civil war, and in Swedish and French newspapers we had read visiting journalists' accounts of the hu-

mane principles practiced there. The prisoners governed themselves, we had read, they played football, grew vegetables and soon became so converted that the Greek King could pay them a visit and dance folk dances with the "graduates" before they were allowed to return to the mainland as free soldiers in the royal army. We had a vivid impression as we approached the island that the King was ardently awaited by those who still went to school. On the high, treeless slopes the prisoners had formed the royal emblem and spelt out patriotic slogans with millions of white pebbles from the beach. It is always very nice when people realize their mistakes, but this ostentatious conversion was not calculated to heighten one's esteem for mankind in general and political views in particular. Having studied through the glasses the dead-straight rows of barracks and tents down by the shore, we steered out among the white horses toward our next goal: the sound between the islands of Keos and Kythnos.

One usually speaks of the Greek archipelago, and it certainly is an archipelago in the sense that the mariner always sees islands around him. But when you think that the distance between the islands is often twenty to thirty nautical miles, you realize that it is only the height of the mountains which allows you to navigate safely with land in sight the whole time, although in reality you are just as much at the mercy of the sea as in the middle of the Gulf of Finland or the English Channel. The wind stiffened the farther out we came, but *Daphne* is quite strong and carries her sails well. In less than three hours we reached the lee of Keos' high coast, the driving spray subsided and Mona could serve a delicious lunch while the skipper kept an eye on the wind between mouthfuls and *Daphne* rocked slowly out toward the rolling crests beyond the wide straits.

Like all skippers, *Daphne's* is spoiled by his crew; after lunch, therefore, I decided to have forty winks while the cook was quickly and comically changed into a helmsman. I was just aware that the

sea was getting rough again and that the waves were washing over the deck, when I dropped off to sleep in the hammock . . . to be waked up some time later by a faint but *new* sound in the general noise of water, rather as a soldier at the front line is waked up by a machine gun going off in the midst of the "normal" nightly gunfire. The sound was made by water swashing to and fro *inside the cabin*. When I rubbed my eyes and peered out I found that we were right out in the middle of the huge bay—twenty-five miles wide—between Keos and our goal, the island of Tinos. The wind was blowing much harder and *Daphne* was heeling hard down with the whole of the railing under water. What had caused the leakage? As a rule, the *Daphne* is completely watertight, and I began to wonder if we had sprung a leak in the heavy sea. The explanation was simpler, but did not mend matters: the sun had dried out the planking during the *Daphne's* long stay in Athens, despite the fact that we had sluiced her down every day and that she is built of teak. Large cracks had formed in the planking, obviously larger the higher up they were. We had not noticed the leakage in the morning when the wind was moderate, but now that the boat was heeling over the water was streaming in.

We have a powerful Albin pump, bigger than the size of the boat warrants, in fact, and were not unduly worried. But I soon noticed that the water level in the cabin seemed no lower, despite my efforts at the pump. The volume of water stayed about the same, which meant that if we kept on pumping we had a chance of reaching the island of Syra in the southeast. But the wind increased in violence, the sea grew rougher and soon we were nearly blinded by the stinging spray. First the foresail split, then the spanker. We had to abandon our course to Syra and let the boat drift, while we furled all sails. I expected the leakage to be less now that we were no longer heeling over, but the water poured in from two sides instead of one and the hull sank deeper and deeper. The foredeck in particular was almost on a level with the sea and a glance through



the hatch showed that the whole of the fo'c'sle was filled to deck level with water, which for some reason did not run down through the floor of the fo'c'sle. All at once it was horribly clear to us that *Daphne* might sink at any moment. Had we already passed the limit when the gradually rising water was impossible to check? In the cabin it had reached up to the bunks, the engine was half submerged and now and then a green-blue wave would engulf the entire deck, so that further floods swept down through the hatchway where I stood pumping like a man possessed. Mona was working with a pail at the cabin door, but was knocked nearly senseless by the violent lurching of the uncontrolled and drifting boat. And over all this, over the ruthless sea and our helpless, pitching boat, the sun shone down from a cloudless blue sky and made it impossible for us to take the danger in real earnest. For three hours we fought for *Daphne's* and our own lives, squeezing every ounce of strength out of our bodies, retching with exhaustion and seasickness, straining our eyes in vain toward the distant blue haze of the coast.

At last we noticed that we were slowly but surely getting the upper hand. By the time the boat had been pumped dry and the fo'c'sle had been bailed out it was nearly nightfall and the sun, large and glowing, was leaning over the wild sea. We were both dead beat, but faced with the risk of being left out here among the islands in storm and darkness I crept down into the cramped engine room to try and get our dripping Olympia going. The entire oil system was full of water, which I tried to suck out with a rubber tube. I sucked and spat, sucked and spat, until after an eternity I could taste black oil instead of bitter sea water. Even so the engine refused to start, it was too wet and the batteries had also got water in them. Just before sunset we hoisted the mainsail, but only had strength to get it three quarters of the way up. We could at any rate run before the wind down toward the east coast of Kythnos, where, according to the chart, there was a sheltered bay,

Hagios Stefanos. Fortunately the wind had died down a little, but the waves were still enormous. For safety's sake we kept the pump going all the time.

It felt almost unreal when, after a good hour, we could shelter from the heavy sea behind Stefanos' point. It still remained to tack with only our mainsail against the vicious wind that blew from the head of the bay, for we were too weak to replace the ripped sails with new ones. But even these last weary miles were put behind us thanks to *Daphne's* good sailing qualities, and as darkness fell we reached the little sandy beach farthest in. There were one or two poor-looking cottages below the ridge of the hill, but they were so inconspicuous and gray that we did not notice them until we had anchored. A rowboat came out with some fishermen, who, with the help of signs and a few words of English, gave us to understand that even here the wind was too strong for us to be able to rely on the anchor. They took a rope ashore and made it fast to a post on the beach, but we were so worn out that we were indifferent to everything. We simply dropped on to our sodden bunks and were soon dead to the world, while all night long the meltemia swept furiously down the mountainside and lashed the water of the bay to foam.

Hagios Stefanos is a place we would never have visited if circumstances had not taken us there. The last time a strange boat had been there—six years before—the visit was also unintentional: an English destroyer had been mined outside Kythnos and three survivors had found their way in here in a lifeboat. They sank their boat in the bay and stayed for two months, hidden by the fishermen, until a submarine came and fetched them right under the very noses of the Germans. We were told this next morning by young Heleas Mavrommatis, a 21-year-old lad from Piraeus who was on a visit to his former comrade-in-arms, Konstantinos Psaras. Heleas could speak about one hundred words of English and was one of the nicest people we met in Greece: intelligent, serious,

handsome as a classic statue and with something noble and heroic about him which made him the ideal picture of a young warrior. He had been in the field for four years up in Macedonia. After his return home he had taken up athletics in his spare time and was now one of the best discus throwers in Greece. Together with Konstantinos he helped me all day with the stubborn, waterlogged engine, which was finally set going by hand and then made to charge the batteries while running idle. Another kindly villager, "the captain," who owned a little caique moored by the beach, took expert charge of our torn sails. Mona was kept busy all day drying everything that did not have to be thrown away. Our entire inventory was soaked through: clothes, books, typewriter, sugar, radio, spaghetti, motorcycle and charts. The wind was just as strong as the day before and the sky was overcast with the light cloud veils, like fishbones, which we grew to detest during the next few weeks.

We would have preferred to lie in our bunks all day without stirring, as we were now feeling the full reaction of the previous day's bodily and mental strain. The kindness, helpfulness and curiosity of the Stefanos people, however, gave us not a minute's peace, and we just had to accept their invitation to a little party to welcome us that evening. The village consisted of three or four houses on the beach itself; a herd of large black pigs rooted about in the sand in company with a flock of hens. The hillsides surrounding the valley were treeless and sunbaked, but some sparse corn stubble showed that they nevertheless yielded a meager crop during the winter, which down here is the time of growth and harvest, while the summer is nature's period of rest. Kythnos' chief village is on the other side of the island and is reached by narrow donkey-tracks after a day's march; from there a steamer goes twice a week to Syra. Stefanos is therefore as much off the beaten track as a place can be in Greece, which was a decided advantage during the war but is rather a nuisance in peacetime. There were plenty of children swarming round the houses, however, evidence that the species can

be propagated without maternity homes and nurses. The oldest inhabitant was 87-year-old "Granny," who had borne nineteen children—"of whom, however, fifteen had been drowned while out fishing," as Heleas added in a little parenthesis when he introduced us to her.

The little party at Stefanos was neither extraordinary nor sensational, but was one of the evenings we shall long remember from our voyage. We sat outside the Psaras family's house in the little pergola-like space framed by a low stone wall. The entire village was present, but in the darkness only vague figures and the glow of cigarettes could be seen in the background, while the captain, Granny, Konstantinos' parents and one or two others emerged more clearly in the light of an oil lamp. Supper consisted of fresh figs and spring water. A fat little dressmaker who was on a visit to the village sang sonorous oriental folk songs, Heleas played the guitar very well and an old man recited poems. Then they all began calling for Asimia and after a while a 12-year-old girl with long black plaits was dragged along. Asimia was a dancer. From the time she was a small child she had shown an uncontrollable and inexplicable passion for dancing and had evolved a whole ballet repertoire all on her own, a new dance to every tune she heard. Asimia danced, Heleas accompanied and everyone present sat in dumb admiration and watched this lean, thistledown body weaving patterns in the air. She floated like a tiny flame before the dark, surging sea and the strains of the guitar blended with the high, even moaning of the meltemia. Then Asimia danced folk dances with Konstantinos as partner without one's even being aware of the difference in age or height between the child and the man—so superbly did the little girl dance. After this display the inhabitants of Stefanos wanted us at all costs to do something, show them how we sing or dance in our country. Unfortunately we both lack the talents called for in such a situation and did our utmost to wriggle out of it. But all to no avail; Mona finally sang, as well as she could,

the old Swedish folk song *Ack Värmeland du sköna*. Then it was my turn. In my desperate need I struck up the only thing I have had any practice in singing over the years: the drinking song often sung at parties before a *snaps* is tossed down, *Helan går* . . . The kindly darkness hid my blush of shame, but to my undisguised amazement the tune caught on, Heleas took it up on the guitar, soon everyone was humming *Helan går* with great feeling and conviction and Asimia began trying out how she could give dancing form to the music. However, when Heleas asked me what kind of song it was, what the words meant, I answered rather evasively:

“Oh, it’s a Swedish love-song. . . .”

Next morning when we looked out of the cabin we saw at once that something special was afoot in the village. The women were baking in the large brick ovens, shaped like beehives, which were built out in the open; beautiful, old-time national costumes were being aired on the hillside; silk ribbons were being plaited into thick braids of hair and large hampers were being carried down to the small boats drawn up on the beach. We were told that everyone was making ready for the feast of the Madonna, the *panagia*, which was to take place in a church somewhere on the south side of Kythnos, and it was taken for granted that we would come along. Frankly, the mere thought of steering out on to the stormy sea again was unpleasant. We had not yet recovered from our tussle with the meltemia and would have preferred to go away for a few days to a spot where we did not have to see, hear or think of the sea. But about three o’clock in the afternoon Heleas and Konstantinos came rowing out with old Granny so that she would have a more comfortable journey on board *Daphne* and one little fishing boat after the other darted out of the bay, running before the wind with minute sails. We could hardly do less. With the two young men on board and a fishing boat crammed with people in tow *Daphne* also headed out. The sea was still very rough, but we

had the wind with us and followed the coast, which gave shelter here and there. After only an hour we reached the point with the little church and a large whitewashed pilgrims' hostel surrounded by eucalyptus trees not unlike birches. Outside the bay several fishing boats were battling against the wind with sails and oars in a vain attempt to get in. *Daphne* was the only boat there with an engine, and so all afternoon we had to tow boats into the harbor with peasant families from the neighborhood, festively clad but soaked to the skin. Another stream of pilgrims came riding on donkeys and mules over the treeless mountains above the bay. In the fading light this procession was silhouetted against the evening sky as a series of tableaux from the Bible: there was Joseph leading the donkey with Mary and the child; there were the Three Kings with their long beards, advancing with dignity; there was the Queen of Sheba and Joseph the oppressed and his arrogant brothers. We had anchored at the very head of the bay and in addition made fast ashore with two stout ropes. Beside us on the beach a spring gushed out at the foot of a rock and near by the people from Stefanos had made their camp. They seemed to regard us as belonging to their village, and we gladly attached ourselves to them among all the new faces.

That same evening we visited the newly built little Madonna church together with the Psaras family. Heleas urged us reverently to kiss the holy icon, for then we would have a prosperous voyage. The youthful and black-bearded priest assured us that it was painted by none other than the apostle Luke, who in that case must have had a prophetic premonition of how painting would develop during the 15th century. Like so many other holy icons, this one had been tossed into the sea by godless Turks from its original resting place and had floated across the water to a distant shore—in this case Kythnos—where, by means of nocturnal visions and manifestations, it eventually had made its presence known to the inhabitants and exhorted them to build a pilgrims' church. This by no means

had happened six or seven centuries ago, as similar legends in France and Italy would lead you to believe, but only as many decades. The Kythnos Madonna is so new that ten years ago she was still known to only a few villagers, but since then she has performed so many miracles that a host of pilgrims, increasing in size every year, come to see her on August 15th, the Madonna's Feast Day. The priest had his work cut out for him to cope with the huge influx. He lived with his family in a house beside the church and was so fond of his little son—as curly-headed as the Christ-Child—that he walked about with the lad on his shoulders like St. Christopher, while he chatted with acquaintances, received votive offerings and kept an eye on the mischievous youngsters who were supposed to be in charge of church bells hung up in the open, but who were all too apt to ring them in and out of season.

The really big ceremony was not to take place until three days later on the Madonna's Feast Day, but people are in no hurry in Greece and would rather come to a festival too early than too late. The day after our arrival the meltemia blew harder than ever and we stayed on board most of the day; I studied archeology and Mona calked the seams in the side of the boat with rubber putty to avoid a repetition of our narrow escape. We did go for one little walk inland. The pilgrims' church was a long way from the nearest village, but on the hillsides near by we found several isolated huts built of loosely stacked but neatly whitewashed stones. The roads, too, were bordered by stone walls, which drew sharp black shadows across the bare, amazingly pure landscape. In the afternoon we had to turn out on a rescue expedition and tow our friend the captain's caïque into the bay. Right up to the last he had waited in Stefanos for better weather, but had finally started with three families on board. Outside the pilgrims' bay his engine had suddenly stalled and the boat was now threatening to drift out to sea. There was a tearing wind and it was all *Daphne* could do to haul the heavy boat in past the point foot by foot. Halfway into the bay, however, we

came to a dead stop: the coupling in our overtaxed engine began to slip, the engine raced and we both drifted out. I do not know how it would have ended if I had not managed to grip the seabed with my 230-foot-long anchor chain, which I hurriedly cast out. Heleas and Konstantinos then hauled us in with ropes, and the captain's clan could go ashore and make themselves a motley campsite near the others'. That evening there were fantastic scenes when a steamer packed with pilgrims arrived from Athens. A huge bonfire was lighted on the point to guide it in, the church bells pealed, a brass band played on board the steamer, which also set up an awful hullabaloo with its siren. The crush was indescribable when the two hundred passengers were rowed ashore in fishing boats; there were greetings of welcome and shouts of farewell, squabbles and kisses, laughter and blessings, the whole thing rounded off with an evening service in the church once the steamer had vanished on the pitch-black, surging sea.

On the day of our arrival we had given first aid to a child with an abscess in its foot whom a farmer had brought out to us in a rowboat. Mona pierced the abscess with a disinfected penknife, I gave the child two pain-killing tablets and the parents were extremely grateful. By next day our reputation as doctors had evidently spread: a boy who had fallen and injured his head was rowed out and bandaged up, an old woman in a faint was revived with an ice compress and a nip of brandy. By way of fees we were given food—freshly caught fish, goat cheese or a shoulder of mutton. But the beach was full of invalids who had come to be healed by the miraculous madonna and we were disturbed to notice an increasing desire among these unfortunates to be cured by the foreign medicine men as well. One sick person after the other was rowed out to *Daphne*. What can you do for a cancer in the last stages or for a paralyzed child? We had only our pills, which we handed out right and left, and when the pains ceased many thought they were being healed and began uttering loud thanksgivings both to the



madonna and to us. The situation was in fact becoming untenable and the day before the great feast we were so distressed that we decided to attempt a breakout despite the continued meltemia. The Stefanos people were surprised and even hurt on their Madonna's behalf at this unexpected departure and old Granny had tears in her eyes when we said good-by. The most difficult leave-taking, however, was from little Asimia, the 12-year-old dancer from Stefanos. She came to see us rather on the quiet and implored us to take her with us. She would be our servant and do everything for us if only she could come with us to Athens, Italy or Sweden, it didn't matter where, as long as she could train to be a *real* dancer. At least that was how we interpreted her gestures, tears and explanations, in which the word *koros*, *koros*, dance, dance, kept recurring. Our promise to send her some material from Sweden to make a fine ballerina dress was poor consolation.

I will not deny that we were rather trembling at the knees as we made ready for sea. Every conceivable precaution had been taken: we fed in our smallest forestaysail, our heavy storm sail of Ljungström type and reefed the spanker. When we came to hoist the sails we were so nervous that we tore a great rent in the spanker; it took Mona half an hour to sew it together again. At last we got the anchor up and we paid off, but the gusts inshore were so fierce that we nearly drove up on the rocks before we could set course past the point. Not until we lay outside the bay with our sails as tight as drums could we stop to look back. All the people had gathered on the church terrace to wave good-by and the priest got his boys to give us an extra peal on the bells. There was a very strong wind out here, but we saw with relief that *Daphne* was carrying her sails well and that we could easily bear down toward Syra's south cape, about 25 nautical miles away. The sun shone, we had good way on, and only light spray flew across the deck despite the mountainous waves. It looked as though it would be a fine cruise, in fact, and our fear gradually gave way to a triumphant certainty

of victory. The helmsman, however, had a sufficiently vivid memory of the previous cruise to implore the skipper with tears in her eyes not to tempt providence with impious and defiant utterances such as: "Why, this is nothing! It was really only the leakage that stopped us from getting to Syra last time. *Daphne* can cope with the meltemia all right."

After about two hours we passed the high, desolate islands of Serpho Poulo and Piperi, while farther away Great Serpho raised its treeless diamond-polished crown, faceted by many valleys and with white villages tinging the blue gray. At sunset as we approached Syra something unheard-of happened: the wind died down for the first time since the morning at Cape Sounion. A little village gleamed invitingly at the head of a bay, but in spite of its beguiling name, "Krasilimani," i.e., "Wine Harbor," we started the engine and went on toward the main town on the other side of the island. Darkness fell rapidly and there was no moon to guide us as we felt our way round Syra's south coast inside a series of treacherous skerries. If some fishermen had not happened to light a bonfire on one of the skerries we probably would have run aground, as the beacons in Greece are often feebler than the light from the first available cottage window. About ten o'clock, however, we steered into the large and welcoming harbor, in whose glassy water the town of Syra's two sugar-loaf hills reflected their thousands of lights. A courteous harbor master who spoke French showed us to a moorage outside the harbor office.

Syra is the trading center of the Cyclades and as such plays about the same part today as Delos during antiquity. It was tempting to stay for some days in this island capital with its old patrician houses and Catholic traditions, but opposite Syra on the other side of the 15-mile-wide straits is another island which attracted us more. Even before we sailed to Greece we had come across the name of Tinos in avidly studied guidebooks and read of the miraculous icon which was discovered there in 1884 and which, with the passing

of time, had turned this place into a Grecian Lourdes with annual pilgrims' feasts and a marble church filled with votive offerings. Now that misfortune had prevented us from seeing the *panaia*, the Feast of the Madonna, at Kythnos, we were doubly interested in Tinos. Nothing is more revealing of the vague concept we call national character and temperament than the great national festivals, whether it is France's democratic *quatorze juillet*, England's coronations steeped in tradition, Sweden's satiated May Day celebrations or Spain's bullfights. It would have been stupid, in fact, not to have gone over and seen how the Greeks celebrate one of their greatest festivals in the place which is really its center.

Fifteen nautical miles between two islands plainly visible one from the other is not much, and we did not think of starting until nine o'clock in the morning after a quick look at Syra. Our experience of the meltemia, however, had taught us a certain caution, and when a sea captain started talking to us as we were having dinner at a restaurant in the port of Syra after our arrival, we decided to ask his view of our plans.

"No," he explained, "it's no good. You must take advantage of the calm and start at four o'clock in the morning so that you get there before dawn. The meltemia is sure to start blowing again at sunrise and then you'll have the wind dead against you."

We therefore had only a few hours in Syra. It was a hot night and many of the townspeople had made their way down to the harbor to enjoy the cool by the water. In company with our new friend the sea captain we sauntered up and down among the seething crowds, tried different qualities of Syra wine in the taverns and gave ourselves up with pleasure to the special and indefinable atmosphere prevailing in towns situated on islands. We recognized it from Palma on Mallorca, from Ajaccio on Corsica, from Portoferraio on Elba, even from Visby in the Baltic. I suppose it is partly the feeling of being free of the mainland and everything connected with it, but it is also a positive experience of something which

might be called the miniature state as an idea, of the harmonious affinity between a town and a limited countryside which characterized the old Greek city states. All islands are natural kingdoms and their centers natural capitals.

We were late getting to bed and for some reason the alarm clock failed to go off. Not until five o'clock were we steering out by engine under the paling stars from a sleeping Syra, which we never saw in daylight and which perhaps for this reason remained such an attractive memory. Outside the harbor we met a high ground swell from the previous day, but as yet no wind. The compass gave us our course until after a good hour Tinos' mountainous silhouette began to loom up. But with the dawn came the meltemia, strong from the outset. We reefed our sails at once to steady the boat in the heavy sea and found to our relief that thanks to our powerful engine we were still doing about five knots against wind and waves. It was then that a well-known and unpleasant sound could be heard from the engine room: the coupling was slipping as it had done two days before at Kythnos when we were towing in the captain's caïque, and I knew of old that repairs could be done only in a calm harbor. There was nothing for it but to stop the engine and go on with only our sails. Fortunately the coast was so near that we could already make out the white pilgrims' church some way inland and the steamers dressed over all inside the jetty. But we made very little way in the rough sea and it took us three hours of hard struggle and incessant drenching to reach the roads, where a Greek destroyer was lying at anchor with the prime minister, Plastiras, on board.

There at last, we thought, and were already beginning to worry about how we were to make our way into the chock-full harbor in this weather without an engine. The beach, which lay flush with the direction of the wind, would surely give a little shelter? But no: the sun shone from a cloudless sky and the houses in the town gleamed white as snow against the dark blue sea, but such violent

gusts of wind blew down the mountainside that despite our minimum of canvas our topside was pressed down right to the cabin roof. I had just shouted to Mona in a short lull that this was the worst wind we had ever sailed in, when something inconceivable happened. I have often known sails to tear or split, but this was something else. Before our amazed eyes the mainsail and the spanker simply dissolved into their smallest component parts and flew up into the sky in the form of white flakes, much in the same way as when you blow on a thistledown. Bereft of help from both sails and engine we were, admittedly, in no immediate danger of our lives—it was always possible with our remaining foresail to run before the wind back to Syra—but it was very thwarting to have to turn back right on the doorstep. Despite my protests Mona started waving appealingly with a rope to the destroyer—without result it seemed. We had already drifted some distance out to sea when a launch came out and took us in tow. After a further hour of nightmarish maneuvers in the overcrowded harbor, during which, among other things, the towrope got caught up in the launch's propeller, we were able to make fast to a caique and thank our rescuers, who, in their nervousness, made one wrong maneuver after the other. It was not until afterward that we understood the reason for this agitation: General Plastiras was waiting on board the destroyer, the Madonna and the Archbishop of Greece were waiting up in the church and in the harbor and streets of the little town fifty thousand people from all over Greece were waiting for the launch to bring the prime minister ashore.

We got to the quay, rather windblown and embarrassed, just in time for the salute of guns which marked the beginning of the ceremony, and as—much against our will—we had become persons of some note, several policemen instantly conducted us to the little reception committee which was waiting to shake the general's hand as he stepped ashore. To the accompaniment of all the ships' sirens the holy Icon was then carried down to the harbor, where

Greece's gray-bearded archbishop and prime minister harangued each other, while tens of thousands of people perched up on balconies and roofs and ships moored to the quay by the stern formed a crater of heads all around. I cannot deny that we were quite amused both by the spectacle and our own adventure, which had cast us so abruptly, clad in our wet sailing togs, among all these prelates, notabilities and officers in full-dress uniform. But when, together with the little group of the elect, we followed the Icon back to the church along a street lined with the kneeling crowd and sick people stretched out on the ground, it was no longer so funny. True, the prayers and imploring glances were intended for the Madonna, but it is not easy to concentrate on a single small object in such a brilliant procession. By pure mistake some of this collected supplication fell on us, who, healthy and happy, were walking in the Icon's company, and if the prime minister was only half as ashamed as we were there is hope for Greece's social policy.

Once inside the church, past all those who had been queuing since sunrise in the insufferable heat, we had the privilege, in full view of countless impatient eyes, of kissing the Icon, whose protective pane of glass was already almost opaque from all the mouths which the sick and the faithful had pressed against it.

"You surely didn't kiss the Icon *properly*?" Mona asked afterward.

"Of course! When you get the chance of kissing something holy for once in your life it's as well to make the most of it."

In the church at Tinos I realized that incense can have a purely practical function apart from the religious: to smother the stench of sweating human bodies. Frightful scenes took place here with people who were carried in groaning and shouting on litters; one did not know whether it was to die or because they thought the Madonna was about to heal them. An old woman in a side aisle who seemed well known to all was reading prayers and incantations over the insane; she took them in her arms one after the other,

hid their heads in her veil and intoned in a tearful voice, while all around other lunatics with keepers awaited their turn. There were hysterical squabbles around a young monk who was busy pouring oil in the lamp above the image of the Madonna and then portioning it out by the drop into bottles which were held out to him. However diluted the oil is at this ceremony, and however much it is diluted again later, flames fed by the oil from Tinos burn before the icons in homes all over Greece. Another monk was raking in votive offerings: the walls of the church were covered with images of silver, wax or ordinary metal representing parts of the body made whole; votive ships of silver, given by mariners, hung from the ceiling; and the Madonna owns jewels which are supposed to be fabulous. But far more glaring than the gold and the diamonds were the all-prevailing need and misery: in emaciated bodies, distorted faces and heartbreaking prayers.

Round the church open porticos had been built skirting palm-shaded courtyards, and here the really sick pilgrims had encamped. We had to pick our way among people stretched out on the ground and surrounded by the filth and stench of human bodies but also by healthy, laughing children who darted in and out unconcerned, playing with newly found playmates. I have seen war in all its horror, but it always makes an unnatural and nightmarish impression; the mass suffering of long, incurable diseases and poverty here on Tinos, however, seemed as natural as life itself, a normal human condition in which, as earthly beings, we all had a share. It was perhaps this feeling of fellowship which made it so hard for us, alone among all the pilgrims, to own the relative comfort and sheltered privacy which *Daphne* provided. Ashamed, but at the same time secretly thankful for our privilege, we went on board exhausted in the afternoon to rest for some hours after our, to say the least, varied experiences.

In the evening Tinos changed its character to a marked extent. Although in the daytime there had been a brisk trade in the wind-

ing high street with sacred and profane things, nuns and cheapjacks vying with each other in peddling *ex votos*, cheeses, wax candles and plaited basketwork to a sweating and sore-footed public, when darkness fell the atmosphere became entirely that of a fair. The destroyer's orchestra played on the quay and there was dancing: not modern dances but tripping and involved Greek folk dances to half-oriental music. Wiry old peasants in fustanellas with white, well-curled mustaches spun nimbly round, keenly admired by the youths, and young girls with pretty silk scarves round their thick plaits danced themselves into a glow. The keynote of an ingenuous country festival was not even marred by occasional city types from Athens, men in white, immaculately pressed trousers and women in large hats that lent a comic 19th century air to this timeless world of Hesiod. In the alleyways there was an overpowering smell of sheep being roasted whole on the spit over open fires, and in the cafés people were drinking coffee, *ouzo* and torrents of tepid rain water, six months old, the only drinking water available.

What had become of the Tinos of sickness and misery? We made our way upward along the high street and soon passed the invisible borderline between the festive town and that of suffering. The church itself was shut, and we had an impression through the windows of thousands of oil lamps and wax candles burning inside, while outside the doors a dark mass of people was standing, singing deep and low like Russian Cossacks, ceaselessly hour after hour, so that the singing was like a shell surrounding the void in whose middle the Icon gleamed alone. The singing also droned dully and faintly through the colonnades and courtyards round about where the sick lay stretched out in the darkness, a huge caravan of affliction which had camped here for some hours before again setting out into the desert with its burdens. Here and there was a small, flickering fire or a feeble lamp, around which huddled figures watched over some invalid, and out of the darkness came inarticulate voices which might have been weeping or praying and were



probably doing both at once. We stole through this camp as though seeking somebody, stepping over the bodies as over corpses on a battlefield. What were we looking for? Perhaps the answer to the personal question which Tinos had awakened within us, a question which each of us clearly saw in a different light. For while a muddled stream of philosophic and political thoughts was pouring through my brain, I saw in the glow of a campfire that Mona's face was wet with tears. Which was the right answer: the wish to combat the suffering or the resigned willingness to share it? Here, in this environment, I felt that any reaction other than my wife's was wrong: suffering has, through Christianity, become an ally and friend instead of an enemy, it has become the only sure gateway to the kingdom of the spirit. But from the depths of my soul there welled up a protest, a hatred of this suffering, so that I sympathized not only with these Greeks' ancestors and their positive attitude to life but also with the modern mentality, whose program of social welfare and faith in science may seem childish and superficial in the face of life's bottomless misery, but is nevertheless a great and untried hope. Learn by suffering, Aeschylus said; but he also believed that suffering can be overcome by wisdom.

On the way home we went in to a little restaurant in a back street, undoubtedly one of the most humble eating places on Tinos. The proprietor was standing frying fish in oil, while his ten-year-old son did the waiting, bringing the fish to the table wrapped in newspaper instead of on plates. We were given resinous wine to drink with it and sat on benches at long, rickety tables. We soon began talking to our table companion, a girl of about eighteen. She told us that she was a nurse and had earned a little extra money by typhus vaccination, which had enabled her to make the pilgrimage to Tinos quite alone from her home town Drama near the Bulgarian frontier in order to ask the Madonna to heal her sick mother. She was so enchanting, so childish in spite of all the terrible experiences she had been through during the war together

with her family, and she radiated such an indefinable purity of soul that we well understood the nuns at the orthodox convent inland on the island, who had offered her food and lodging when she had knocked on their door the previous evening after toiling up the mountain. Now her steamer had put off its departure from the evening until next morning, and she was obviously quaking at the thought of sleeping out in the street, alone and without a single friend among fifty thousand strangers. I have seldom seen anyone light up with such joy as she did when we offered to let her sleep on board *Daphne* in the empty forecabin, and it was this joy which first made us realize to the full how fearful and lonely she had felt. As we sat round a cup of tea a little later in the bright, cozy cabin, Soula, as our guest was called, confided to us that she had besought the Madonna for help but that even so this was a greater miracle than she could ever have imagined. We stayed up quite late listening to her humorous description of her journey from Salonika to Tinos with two thousand other pilgrims for a cost of about five shillings a head. It was the first time she had been away from home, and everything made a deep impression on her. Not least *Daphne*, for soon after we had retired to the aftercabin we heard her thanking the Madonna aloud and asking her to protect "the *Daphne* and her pious owners." This lifted the complex we had been burdened with all day: that we were the only spectators among all those participants. Now we and our boat had been given a humble task and been found worthy of forming a part of the whole.

Soula left at dawn on a steamer which the raging meltemia caused to list heavily before it was out of the harbor. It was not very tempting sailing weather and we decided to go for a donkey ride on Tinos. An *agoyaut*, i.e. donkey driver, was not hard to find. One always feels ridiculous riding a donkey, presumably for reasons both psychological and physical. The very disproportion between the small animal and one's own comparative magnitude is comical, added to which is the insecure feeling of having lost touch with firm ground

and swaying about on the back of the likable but proverbially stupid beast. When in addition one is guided by a half-imbecile young rogue who runs alongside uttering nonstop the traditional goading cry for donkeys—different in each district and on Tinos something like *iytchak*—and at the same time taking it in turns either to twist the animal's tail or to give it a series of whining blows with a stick on its already hairless rump, one feels at the mercy of unknown and questionable powers and clutches the wooden saddle grimly as the animal climbs up or down the neck-breaking steps and terraces of which the roads on Tinos for the most part consist. Soon the harbor, the town and the pilgrims' church were lying beneath our feet like a relief map in a town-planning office and the white-crested waves on the sea looked just as motionless as when seen from an airplane. The road twisted and climbed, lined on both sides by stone walls and narrow, sunbaked terraces under cultivation. Now and then we passed strange, tower-like dovecotes with lacy open-work brick façades—in all probability a legacy from the time when the pigeon-loving Venetians ruled the island. Small white chapels, dedicated to the dragon-killer George, the archangel Michael and the mariners' patron Nicholas, lay strewn isolatedly over the landscape as everywhere in Greece, and on the summit were windmills with wings which could be reefed like sails and which, despite the reefing, were working like airplane propellers on this particular day. But the villages were the most beautiful of all, these Cycladian villages which we were now seeing for the first time at close quarters. They were like materializations of Corbusier's or some other ultramodern architect's dreams, with their cubic structures placed one above the other like a staircase and with distinct traces of Italian architecture in high campaniles and airy loggias. In this sterile, almost abstract landscape, under an inky blue sky and against the background of the treeless hills' geometrical stone walls and curving terraces, they were pictures of the Cities of the Future in a world which had become utterly logical—until we got up to them and, after riding

along narrow, winding lanes and streets with overhanging houses, found ourselves abruptly in the Middle Ages. The villagers—men in wide, skirtlike trousers, women in black, bearded priests and a horde of children—gave us a friendly wave as we jogged past on our donkeys, and through open doors and windows we caught fleeting glimpses of neat interiors which, with all their poverty, had a wonderfully cozy air.

After a two hours' ride we reached Xynara, the center for the Catholics on the island, with the bishop's palace and a delightful Jesuit college. In common with most of the Greek islands, Tinos has a considerable Roman Catholic population as a survival from the Venetian age. Although in the minority, Catholicism has managed to hold its own on the islands as a cultural factor of some importance, thanks to the unswerving interest of the popes and the religious orders. While the Orthodox monasteries and convents are filled with quite sincere but as a rule uneducated and bearded monks or with nuns who look like peasant women, the Catholic convents are places of learning, where even the Orthodox part of the population prefer to send their children to learn French, mathematics, geography, history, embroidery, singing and piano playing. The school at Xynara, which was run by Italian Jesuits, was closed for the time being as a result of the war and we rode on in the increasingly fiery midday sun to Loutra, where French Ursuline nuns have a famous school. Loutra is almost in the middle of the island, quite near the enormous castle rock Exoburgo, where the capital was situated during the Venetian age. We rode through this ghost city, abandoned two hundred years ago; a dead city quivering in the sun, overrun by lizards and brambles. Such a place can never lose its power of attraction for the stranger coming from his drudgery in the north, however many other places like it he may see down here in the south, where the civilizations lie in layers one on top of the other like growth rings on a tree and the very earth is full of the crumbled bones of past generations.

Loutra is in a little fertile valley, surrounded on all sides by mountains which shut out the view of the sea. Shady groves and green gardens tell of an unusual plenitude of water, and at the sight of the little town's—or rather village's—mighty churches, palaces with Venetian arched windows and wells with marble balustrades, one is struck by the same wonderment as in every inland settlement on the islands: how has it been possible to drag these stones here and how can people live without any communication with the outer world other than donkeyback? When you have ridden for hours along narrow paths, climbed up steep steps and crossed dried-up mountain streams and then suddenly find yourself in a perfectly normal little town like Loutra, it is impossible to believe that the whole place has not been transported there by magic, complete with all its houses, churches and cobblestones, with fragile old furniture and whitehaired women peeping out between the well-starched window curtains.

Loutra is a place where you realize more clearly than anywhere else that time is not a uniform power which flows through the world, but a river with a deep main channel, many tributaries and stagnant backwaters where there is almost no current at all. Loutra's French Ursuline convent with its school for young society girls may not be listed in the guidebooks as a sight not to be missed, but it offers something more remarkable than most of the three-starred buildings, because here it is not only the stones which are old, it is time itself. The very smell that greeted us as we stepped inside the glass door and stood on the beeswaxed wooden floor in the hall was exactly the same as in my grandparents' home and put me at once into a state between dream and waking. A youngish nun in a dun-colored robe greeted us in French and showed us into the reception room, where we sat down cautiously, Mona in a cane rocking chair, I on a sofa with neat antimacassars. On a round table with a richly embroidered cloth with bobbles was a cast iron kerosene lamp, in front of the window a potted palm was enthroned,

the ornamented green tiled stove gleamed with newly polished brass doors and a xylographed Sistine Madonna stared from the wall straight across the room at a daguerreotype illustrating the clipper-bowed warship *Le Téméraire*, belching clouds of smoke and surrounded by a wreath of mustachioed officers in oval insets; the frame bore a silver plate with the words: *Souvenir de notre visite à Tinos le 12 février 1891*. We had plenty of time to admire this interior, ultra modern in the 1880s and so perfectly preserved that it seemed new. It was half an hour before the prioress appeared, a woman of perhaps fifty, who, according to what we heard later, belonged to one of France's oldest families. With her pale, intelligent and curiously impersonal face she looked like a nun from Port Royal painted by Philippe de Champaigne. She was so spiritualized that I felt I ought to be asking her advice in some Pascalian struggle of conscience concerning original sin, and I have seldom felt so vulgar as when I stammered forth a request to look over the school out of sheer curiosity. A stately inclination of the head was the only answer I received; the prioress then handed us over to another, less holy nun while she herself received a young Greek girl who kissed her hand and wept bitterly for some reason unknown to us.

The whole convent was in the same style as the reception room. We wandered through classrooms paneled in oak, through large dormitories with crocheted counterpanes on the iron beds and through a gigantic refectory where the leafy and shady garden outside could be glimpsed behind the velvet window curtains. The school has room for over a hundred pupils, but the wealthy families in Athens who wish their girls to learn French and piano playing are evidently not so numerous as they were, as only half of the dormitories were in use and in the long corridors we only met an occasional dark-eyed beauty with her plaits looped over her ears and dressed in a modest uniform with white collar.

Beside the convent was a small hostel where relations who came to see the pupils could put up. It was run, very fittingly, by two

extremely right-thinking ladies from Loutra society, two sisters who were very proud of their good French accent and who knew everything both about the bishop's quarrel with his three lay sisters and how much profit the convent had made that summer by selling melons down in the port to the superstitious Orthodox pilgrims who thought that an old icon could perform miracles. The hostel did not seem to be used very often, as when we asked the two ladies if we could have dinner there, they unlocked a veritable Sleeping Beauty's palace for us. While their servant cooked a fat young pigeon in wine and they themselves selected the most aromatic melon from the garden, we sank into a boundless peace and repose in these rooms where there was every indication that we were the first guests since the war. Here, too, everything was in 1880 style except the magazines on the table. These were *L'Illustration* from the 1920s and 30s; we started dipping into them, looking at pictures of forgotten or all too familiar statesmen, reading accounts of catastrophes of the time and advertisements of long since consumed goods, and the deeper we sank into this past, so near after all, the stronger we felt what we personally and the whole of Europe had lost by the war. We were seized by an unreasonable homesickness, not a void which could be filled by a geographical removal, but a longing for the homes of our childhood and youth, for prewar Europe, and even further back in time: for the stable world lingering in the great rooms in our grandparents' homes. We began vying with each other in memories, Mona of a house in Sturegatan in Stockholm, I of Högbergsgatan in Helsinki. They came back to us, these houses, with a clarity of detail—the winding of the kitchen stairs, a glass ball on grandfather's table—but with a lack of coherence which showed that they had fulfilled their mission: to be digested and absorbed like food, to be dissolved in our blood.

The pigeon and the melon were put before us, the sunlight cast red and green reflections through the colored panes of the veranda door and outside the wind soughed in the tree tops as deeply as in

our childhood. In this asylum we were suddenly taken back to a world which we had little dreamed of finding in the Cyclades; a blissful haven which let us forget the sea, the storms, the hardships of the voyage and the severe southern landscape beyond the mountains. Were they grandmother's footsteps approaching along the gravel path? No, it was one of her contemporaries with a large coffee tray. We sat talking for a long time to the two Loutra ladies, who mentioned quite casually that they were very pleased to receive guests if any suitable ones turned up, that the tariff was reasonable and that from one of the windows you could see down into the convent garden where the young beauties walked in their leisure hours. Only a strong demon could drag two weary travelers away from such temptations, but we were again conquered by *Daphne* and her demand for the fulfillment of a program once embarked upon.

Going back, the *agoyaut* took us a different way so that we could see an ancient monument, which according to legend was raised on the site where three north winds, slain by Hercules, lie buried. Sure enough we found the monument, a few crumbling stones, on which we laid three figs as a propitiatory offer to the Northwind family, still, alas, very much alive. A well-advised measure, evidently, as when we stood once more on the quay in front of *Daphne* in the darkness, with decidedly tender behinds after the day's total of ten hours on bony donkey backs, the sea was as calm as during the night at Syra. Would the wind return as soon as it had done that time? We decided to be sure rather than sorry and asked the skipper of the caïque moored alongside to wake us at four o'clock in the morning.



## BEFORE THE WIND AMONG THE CYCLADES

THE NIGHT WAS still calm as a rather timid and nervous crew made the *Daphne* ready for sea; the dinghy was lashed to the afterdeck, the shreds of sail were replaced by coarse storm sails and the many mooring ropes were hauled in. The skipper swore at the engine for not starting—because the gas cock was shut. The cook, first mate and deckhand fell down through the open hatchway of the engine room and got a nasty bleeding wound on the shin. Although half the crew had to retire to bed after this mishap, the *Daphne* started according to schedule and nosed her way out cautiously between dark, sleeping caiques on to a sea which tranquilly reflected the kindly stars.

This tranquillity lasted for the next hour, the engine purred and the bow-wave rustled; but the second the glowing sun shot up above the distant mountains—which must have been in Asia Minor—the meltemia awoke. Violent gusts blew down from Tinos' coastal mountains and dyed the sea astern pitch black. We hoisted our storm sails and stopped the engine; the next minute the wind was upon us. *Daphne* leaped ahead, the masts creaked and I began anxiously feeling the stays, but the meltemia was not in earnest that day. The higher the sun rose the fainter grew the wind. By seven o'clock in the morning, as we approached Mykonos, a warm, gentle breeze was caressing us, a school of gay porpoises gamboled around the bows and the little town rose out of the clear blue sea to meet us, with dazzlingly white cubes of houses round the well-sheltered semicircle of the harbor and ten busily whirling windmills

perched up on the hill. This was just how we had imagined the Cyclades: drenched in southern sun, welcoming, summery and carefree—until our meeting with the meltemia gave us another picture of them. This was a world created exactly after our imagination, and at the sight of its fresh beauty Mona forgot all the bitter comments about the vexations of sailing and the harebrained quixotry of certain skippers which had seasoned the morning's conversation. She almost forgot her swollen, aching leg and willingly took the tiller while I furled the sails outside the harbor entrance.

We tied up at the wide pier which protects the harbor and could see at once that it was market day in the town. Round us fishermen in pointed boats rigged with lateen sails edged their way in to unload their crates of fish on the quay; a farmer from some neighboring village was having great difficulty in driving two donkeys and a cow on board his *caïque*; on the shore were sacks, demijohns in plaited baskets and a brand-new cradle, and on the low parapet of the jetty sat a knot of white-bearded old men worthy of the chorus in an ancient Greek tragedy, passing remarks on the day's events and enjoying the cool sea breeze. We also discovered, to our astonishment, a swarm of tourists dressed in shorts and armed with cameras, strange creatures whom we had not seen in Greece up till then; they gradually collected in a motorboat destined for Delos near by. Mykonos is one of the very few tourist and holiday places in Greece.

Unfortunately Mona's leg injury prevented her from going ashore and I had to set off on my own to explore the white town. The custom of whitewashing the houses is widespread all over Greece, but is especially typical of the Cyclades. On Mykonos not only the houses but the actual streets get a thorough coat of whitewash twice a year. The effect is, literally, dazzling, and standing in one of these glistening, white alleyways, where the repeated layers of lime have rounded off all corners and angles, you have an odd feeling of being in a snowed-up, sunlit Alpine village rather than in Greece. Not so

much as a green tree or a grapevine breaks the purity and the only colors except the dark blue of the sky are the roofs and cupolas of the churches, which are often painted pink or light blue. Mykonos' churches are, in any case, a chapter on their own. According to reliable reports they number 365, which is quite a generous allowance for a population of 1,600, even if most of the churches are very small. Sometimes there are three or four next to each other in the winding lanes, and they are built in a very varying and imaginative style which gives them the aspect of modern pieces of giant neo-plastic sculpture. An old man I met in a café during my morning walk discoursed in exquisite French on all the points in the town's favor and I asked him if the Mykonos people were especially religious seeing that they had built nearly as many churches as houses.

"Not more so than other Greeks," he replied. "But when a sea captain or prosperous farmer is in danger of his life at sea he usually promises the Madonna or some saint a church if he is saved. As you see, our waters here are quite stormy."

The countryside outside the town looked just as stony and sterile as on Kythnos and Tinos. I climbed up in the roasting sun to some of the mills, which had unfurled every stitch of sail in honor of the moderate wind. A bearded miller who was looking out of one of the round towers waved an invitation for me to go up and see him. A rickety flight of steps, white with flour, led up to the roaring upper regions, where the enormous millstones were in motion and the whole of the ingenious wooden machinery wheezed and groaned.

In the afternoon Mona refused to stay in bed any longer and hobbled with me to the excellent archeological museum. It contains chiefly archaic ceramics from the big mass tomb on Delos' neighboring island of Rhenea, to which the Athenians in 426 B.C. transferred the contents of all the old tombs on Delos, when this island, being Apollo's birthplace, was proclaimed so holy that no one was allowed to be born or to die there. For archeology it was a very happy

measure, as not only was a large quantity of material collected in one place, but it also gave a definite time limit as a help in dating everything. The most beautiful things in the Mykonos museum are perhaps the sacrificial bowls from the island of Milo, unusually fresh products of its handicraft art. On the way back through the town we found a shop which sold modern handicraft work from Mykonos, mostly woolen materials in very pleasing color combinations. Another customer in the shop, a young lady who spoke American, helped Mona choose an attractive national costume. In this way we got to know Mrs. Lois Kerimis and a little later her husband Niko Kerimis. They were both teachers at the American school in Athens; he was a Greek by birth and taught French, she was born of American parents and taught English. They took us on a sightseeing tour of Mykonos; we visited churches with painted icon-stands from the 17th century, old private palaces with shady loggias and finally an exotic garden with an exceptionally good spring. Our fresh water tanks, which we had not filled since Athens, were getting low, and Niko arranged with a man to bring the water down on donkeyback from the spring to *Daphne* in large demijohns. In the meantime we asked our new friends on board for a drink. But it is dangerous to treat a Greek to anything: he returns it seven-fold. We agreed to have dinner together at the Apollo Restaurant down by the harbor, but Niko settled the bill beforehand with the proprietor. We had fried octopus, lobster soup, *kebab* on the spit, figs, grapes and large quantities of Mykonos wine.

"When I work, I work," Niko explained over the octopus, "and when I sleep I sleep. It's the same with food."

Niko was what you might call a positive nature and his appearance indeed showed that when he ate, he ate. Lois, on the other hand, toyed gracefully with her food and looked as though she ate out of pure distraction. Niko talked about politics, about the imminent change of government and why the English are unpopular in Greece. Lois told us that every day she would spend at least an hour in the

arts and crafts shop, picking and choosing among the colorful lengths of material: "You can put them up with drawing-pins everywhere: along the bookshelves, over the doors or frame photographs with them." But however different the husband and wife were they did have one great interest in common: pedagogics. We learned more Greek during this one evening than during the whole of our voyage to date, and the more wine we drank the more ruthlessly they questioned and corrected us. All the phrases I had learned from the conversation-guide were mustered for review: "Agoyaut, listen to me! Is your name Panayotis?" "Hallo driver, have you gas and tires?" "Honored shepherd, call off your savage dog!" "There is neither water, towels nor candles in my room. Please change the sheets." We also learned that *barba*, i.e. "beard," is perfectly correct when addressing elderly people in the villages. When we parted we could stammer out with great pains: "Sir, your kindness is altogether too great," for a northerner does not go unpunished after eating a special Greek dinner.

We woke up late with tummy-aches to a day just as unchangeably sunny as all the others we had known in Greece. What did surprise us was that so far there was no sign of the meltemia. The skipper on the next-door boat, an old man with stubbly white hair and screwed-up sailor's eyes, pointed toward Tinos to the north and explained in broken seaman's English that when its top had a hood of cloud it was a sure sign of the meltemia. This particular morning the summit was as clear and pure as a diamond against the dark blue sky. "Bonatsa," he added, pointing out to sea. I thought of the Spanish, French and Italian fishermen whom we had so often heard use the same word, probably a Roman nautical term, to denote dead calm. The Greek idea of dead calm, however, was a rather choppy sea, as outside the harbor a wind which in Italy had been called "good breeze" was bearing fishing boats with bellying lateen sails along the coast at a brisk pace. Despite the octopuses swimming about uneasily in our stomachs we felt bound to take advantage of

the fine sailing weather. Guided by the kind Kerimis we set off at once on a victualing expedition in the town, which turned out to be more troublesome than we thought. While cities like Athens and Patras are swamped with every kind of requisite, on the islands and in the villages it is often difficult to get hold of the simplest thing. Sometimes there is no other fruit than figs, no other flour but maize and often the chief article of sale, apart from saddle girths, clothes and pots and pans, is a brown, sirupy, strongly spiced extract which is kept in large cannisters and used as sauce. Vegetables are usually to be had from some old farmer who has come in from his farm and wanders about through the narrow streets with his panniered donkey; fish can be bought down in the harbor direct from the boats.

By twelve o'clock we had everything on board. Lois wrote "Only the mountains never meet" in our guestbook in a neat schoolgirlish hand, and Niko heard my lesson one last time: "My grandfather's hat is in the garden." We glided slowly out from the jetty, tacked toward the little white cathedral and then headed due south. The breeze was as strong as a summer sou'westerly on a July day at home in the Gulf of Finland archipelago, with small white wave-crests glistening across the bay and a good fresh spray over the bows, but instead of low, smooth granite slabs and wind-bent pines there were high blue mountains silhouetted against a warmer sky. Just outside Mykonos we caught sight of a large turtle which had gone to sleep in the hot sun, cradled by the waves: not until we swept past, missing it by a couple of feet, did it wake up and dive in alarm into the depths. We also made another zoological discovery which filled us with delight. Time and again *Daphne* put up large, glittering shoals of flying fish which flew into the wind, the same fish you see portrayed on Minoan frescoes and vases: the first reminder that we were approaching Crete.

Delos, which was the day's goal, is only five nautical miles from Mykonos, and it took us little more than an hour to reach the straits

between the island of Apollo's birth and Rhenea. When one thinks that this place is the center that has given the whole of the surrounding island world—the Cyclades, "those lying in a circle"—its name, when one has read of the part Delos played both as a holy cult place comparable with Delphi and Olympia, as a factor in the struggle for political power in the Delian League, and above all as a seaport and international trading town, one listens with deeper respect to the monotonous surge of the waves against the desolate and uninhabited coast. At the present day there is not even a village left, no settled population, and the large museum building which suddenly appears as you steer into the sound looks from a distance like an airplane hangar on an Arctic island. It is only when you get closer that you get a glimpse of ruins, columns and the whole jumble of stones which excavated ruins consist of. It stretches from the seashore halfway up the 400-foot-high Kyntos hill which dominates the whole of the island, which is about two and a half miles long and not half as wide. On a point on the straits is the archeological villa and by the museum is a small tourist hostel. A yachtsman used to the waters of the Scandinavian archipelago has no use as a rule for his ability to read the details of a chart and to pick his way between the submerged rocks. The sound between Delos and Rhenea was therefore a specially delightful experience for us: we felt quite homesick as, keeping a sharp lookout in the bows, we cautiously glided in among the skerries toward the narrow spit sticking out at right angles from the temple area and consisting of all the loose soil carted away during the excavations. On its south side small boats have excellent shelter from the meltemia, and we made fast to a little jetty with two stout stern ropes. There was not a soul to be seen and everything looked as though it had been abandoned. For us, who were still suffering from our octopus diet of the previous day and only longed for bed, the advantage of lying in a completely undisturbed harbor for once in a way was doubly welcome. As soon as we got the awning up we fell into a long and refreshing sleep,

without having as much as set foot on Delos.

It is understandable if the people in the archeologists' villa over on the point were beginning to wonder if a ghost ship had put in to the island, when no one appeared on shore. At sunset we were awakened by twittering French voices and thought for a moment in our half-sleep that we were on the French canals. Through the cabin window we discovered a deputation of about a dozen children ranging in age from four to ten. They were the French archeological colony's collected children, whose leader, a ten-year-old Indian chief in full war paint, announced that all those present refused to go to bed unless they could see the boat. In view of this threat a lemonade party was hastily improvised on board. Just as our guests were beginning to give us really piquant inside information about family life in the villa the very sweet young mother of two of the young rascals appeared, Madame Courbin. Our conversation with her was on a rather more impersonal plane, but we managed to find out that there was only one archeologist, Dr. Marcadé, at present working on the island, while most of the others at the French school in Athens were busy with excavations in remote villages on Crete and had only sent their wives and children to the fairly comfortable Delos villa for the summer. As the guests trooped off in the dusk Madame Courbin asked us to lunch the following day, a kindness appreciated especially by the cook Mona.

Delos has not the same grand or natural beauty of Olympia and Delphi. You do not feel the presence of something sacred, that special reverence which the Romans expressed with the words *numen adest*, a god is present. Faced with the muddle of porticoes, money-changing buildings, Hellenistic villas and Syrian or Egyptian gods' temple bases, it is easy to forget the now dried-up lake by which legend has it that Leto gave birth to Apollo and Artemis and where even today the white stone lions, one of the most beautiful works of archaic sculpture, stand on guard. One thinks not so much of Theseus, who landed here with Phaedra on his way home from



Crete, as of the tens of thousands of slaves who, at the height of the town's prosperity, could be auctioned in the slave-markets in a single day, and the Dionysus temple with the large marble phalli are reminiscent more of Petronius than of the Homeric hymn. But despite all this, despite the predominantly Hellenistic aspect of the present ruins, Delos has a great charm of its own. I shall never forget the fresh, half-Scandinavian atmosphere of this stony and windy sound, the solitude which was almost frightening on the dark August nights; we heard only the monotonous surge of the sea against the point and saw three lighted windows far away in the archeologists' villa, while a small lantern, like an aimless spirit, moved slowly across the ruins, now vanishing, now reappearing: it was the museum curator going around locking the doors on atriums and mosaics.

The meltemia had returned when we awoke after our first night on the island; Tinos, just visible to the north, had a large hood of cloud on its top and giant waves with white crests rolled through the sound. *Daphne* was well sheltered, however, and we took a morning dip with easy minds together with the French children in the sanded-up Sacred Harbor. We got back to *Daphne* just in time to stop her being bumped by a large motor-driven caïque which was landing a score or so of wet and seasick tourists at the little quay where we lay. Later we saw an open fishing boat battling in through the sound under the minimum of canvas. It was evidently blowing too hard for it to go to Mykonos and the fishermen were seizing the chance to sell their catch to the skipper of the caïque, who was going back when the tourists had had a few hours to wander through the ruins. The archeological lunch was simple and pleasant. None of the hosts was over thirty-five and the wives were all Parisian. We heard that *Daphne* was the third yacht to put in to Delos this summer and that sometimes, when the meltemia blew in earnest, a whole week could go by without a caïque being able to get across from Mykonos. After lunch we looked over

the museum under the guidance of Dr. Marcadé, whose excavations this summer were being carried on in the museum's cellar and store-rooms, where he had found quite a lot of valuable material which had been overlooked and stowed away during the first excavation. The museum's archaic sculptures are especially beautiful—a whole room with *kuros* and *kore* statues and a sphinx from Naxos, quite like her better preserved sister at Delphi. In the afternoon we went for a walk to the theater, to a newly excavated Roman villa, to the oriental gods' terrace halfway up Kynton and to the primitive cult-cave still higher up the hillside. Up on the top it was blowing so hard that we could reach Zeus's altar only by crawling. The view was superb and we almost thought we were standing on the bridge of a giant ship in a storm—as if the extenuated island, narrowed at the ends, had again become the unanchored Delos floating about on the sea which, according to the legend, provided a haven of refuge for the god's mother from Hera's jealousy.

Next day the meltemia was more violent than ever and the tourist caïque from Mykonos canceled its trip. We, too, postponed our sailing after a walk out to the point, from which the sea looked like a snow field. During our voyage through France it was the rainy days which gave us enforced, but in actual fact welcome, parentheses in our daily life, in Greece it was the meltemia. Lying stretched out on the bunk in the cabin with a good book for company is an excellent offset to all external experiences.

The work I was buried in was Werner Jaeger's *Paideia*, which, however, was not a new acquaintance, as the whole of my voyage, the need of seeing and getting to know Greece myself, was probably due to my impression of this book. I intimated in an earlier chapter that classicism in our day is facing a crisis, the causes of which are to be found, in part at least, in the reaction against our grandparents' attitude to life, compromised by two world wars. Greece was loved so greatly by the bearded generations of the 19th century, it was they who discovered, excavated and explained Hellas so

thoroughly that classicism, for us, is associated with the bourgeois illusion of culture which we react against. This misconception can only be rectified when the younger generation has discovered its Greece and seen that the Greeks have something to teach even us—or rather that the greatest help in solving the problems of our time is a more intimate contact with those who laid the straight foundations of our warped civilization. Werner Jaeger has very much this modern attitude; through him the Greeks are brought right up to date and have their say in questions which are vital to us, instead of inviting escape into the world of history and subtle reconstruction. The relationship between the individual and society, between science and humanism, between freedom and fate, is seen here in clear perspective, and Jaeger's main thesis about the Greeks' ever-present demand for culture, *paideia*, is studied in a way which does much to stimulate our own revolt against the deterministic and mechanistic view of life. It is fascinating to read how the Homeric aristocratic ideal evolved—via democratic citizenship in the city-state—into the terrestrially homeless citizenship in the kingdom of the spirit which late antiquity bequeathed to Christianity. Jaeger's expert knowledge and authority make his exposition especially valuable: *Paideia* is not a product of speculative quasi-philosophy and uncontrolled zeal of generalization, but the synthesis of an erudite philologist's lifelong efforts—guided by the strictest claims of objectivity—to understand the Greek culture. For this very reason the subjective affinity with the problems of our time is so convincing and genuine.

In the evening we sat for an hour or two in the villa talking—mostly about France and Paris, for archeologists are like doctors: they only like talking shop with colleagues. All night long the meltemia blew just as hard, and as we had heard that it can keep up for ten days on end we decided to try and start in the morning in spite of it. Perhaps running before the meltemia was not so bad after all? As it increased in violence in the morning, however, we

would very likely have changed our minds if the Frenchmen, to whom we had explained that *Daphne* can stand up to all weathers, had not come down full of admiration to see us off. What do you do in such a case? We made ready for sea, filled with increasing cowardice and rage at our own bravado but stimulated even so by the exciting adventure. The passage out between the skerries was very narrow and the huge waves rolling through the sound could easily have cast us on our beam ends if we did not have enough impetus to start with. We therefore weighed anchor and hoisted the storm-mainsail while still moored astern by a stout rope. The sail was like a drawn bow and the rope was as taut as a fiddle string, but not until we got the forestaysail up and I had taken my seat at the tiller did I give the order "Lachez!" to the Frenchmen on the quay. *Daphne* shot out among the waves like an arrow. We had a breathtaking but unexpectedly pleasant cruise with dry deck and maximum speed to Naxos, which loomed through the haze behind the foaming wave tops. Thanks to her full but not overhanging stern, *Daphne* has an almost incredible knack of lifting her tail over the mountainous waves which threaten the previous second to swamp the entire boat. My only worry was that some extra big roller might make us turn a forward somersault, which small boats occasionally do according to nautical literature.

We reached the cape with the ruins of the Dionysus temple after only three hours, and got our sails down after great effort. Naxia has a large, well-sheltered harbor, where innumerable caiques were loading and unloading. A compact mass of people instantly collected as we steered by engine along the shore; they kept pace with us all the way around the harbor, as though bound to *Daphne* by a magnet, but stood crestfallen when we chose a small island out in the harbor basin as a mooring place. It was so small that there was only just room on it for a snow-white church the size of a doll's house, and in the absence of a bollard we made the painter fast around the entire building. From here we had a good view of the

white town, built on a hill, with a Catholic church at the top and a much more festive Orthodox cathedral down by the shore. The inquisitive Naxos people dispersed frustratedly, except for several enterprising, yelling boys who came swimming out and clamored for foreign stamps. When we asked how they were going to take the stamps ashore they pointed to their mouths, and given this welcome opportunity of at once silencing and getting rid of the intruders we did not hesitate to sacrifice what Scandinavian stamps we had. As quiet as fish they returned one after the other to the shore, except a weedy lad who was evidently shrewder than the others.

"Je suis numismate!" he stated gravely, and made no bones about putting one or two dirty thousand-drachma notes in his mouth.

During the voyage we had been in two minds as to whether we should make for Naxos or Paros. When we chose the former island it was to catch a glimpse of the Venetian Greece of the Crusaders and adventurers which played such a big part in the history of the whole country but survives most strongly here in the capital of the old duchy of Naxos. Venetian dynasties ruled in Naxia from 1204 to 1566 and the Turkish sultans who succeeded them showed such leniency toward the former masters of the islands that the old families could go on living in undisputed possession of their palaces in the town and their estates in the country. I had read in prewar travel books that some of these noble Venetian families still survived, leading a shadowy existence in their houses up in the Catholic part of the town. With something of the giraffe-hunter's expectancy, therefore, we set off up the hill to explore as soon as we had rowed ashore in the dinghy. Compared with the busy, teeming quarter round the harbor, the upper part of Naxia, with its cool, silent, marble-paved lanes, gives a very aristocratic impression. A beggar in rags whom we at first repulsed came with us from the harbor as self-appointed guide, but he had such a nice face that we soon began talking to him. After consulting the Greek phrasebook

we said: "Palace, old, nobility, Venice" and looked at him enjoiningly. He understood at once and beckoned us to follow. By way of tunneled alleys and twisting stairs we came to a house with a large iron-studded door surmounted with a splendid coat of arms. Despite our protests the beggar thumped on the door, which was opened by a little old woman, and we stepped into a room which had once been a stately hall but now served as a donkey stable. Farther in was a large room with tall Gothic windows through which we could see out over the harbor and the sea. Old fishing nets were stretched across the window openings and on the straw-covered floor a score of worldly-wise hens were politely circulating. One or two rafters had half fallen down and through the gap we could see up into the room above. The old woman had no objection to our looking around inside, and soon we were involved with her in a Greek conversation which showed that a little linguistic learning is a dangerous thing. It ran more or less as follows:

"Are you the owner of the house?" "No, a man in the town." "Doesn't he live here?" "No, not now." "Why doesn't he have the house repaired?" "He doesn't know what it looks like." "Is he a poor man?" "No, very rich, the richest man on the whole island." "Doesn't he ever come here?" "No, not since the war." "Was he friendly with the Italians?" (We had seen empty ammunition boxes with Italian text stacked up in a corner of the room.) "He's Italian himself."

We nodded silently at this collaboration tragedy and pressed a note into the old girl's hand on leaving. Not until next day did we find out that we had visited the old ducal palace and that the island's richest man, an Italian by birth, was the duke who had not returned since the war in 1566.

Outside the gate we asked the beggar if there were none of the old families left of the Venetian nobility. Did he know anyone by the name of Sommaripa, Carogna, Sanudo or any of the other names history had preserved? With a laugh and a nod he pulled out

his grubby identity card, on which the name Carogna was printed in Greek letters. Was there anything more we wanted to know? No, we had seen enough of what remained of past greatness in Naxia. We gave the son of the Carognas' illustrious family a fee for his pains and went to the Catholic cathedral, where we read the Latin epitaphs of the old Crusader families on the marble floor. This was undoubtedly the surest place to meet the Cyclades' pirate nobility, the petty kings who, for a few brilliant centuries in the Middle Ages, revived the adventurous and seafaring chivalry of the *Iliad*.

In the afternoon, while exploring again along the deserted alleys in the upper part of the town, we had better luck. A savage dog started barking at us outside a dilapidated palace and a woman came out and apologized in perfect French for the discourteous animal's behavior. The result of it all was that before long we were sitting over a goblet of Naxos wine in a gigantic room with windows facing the sea and old family portraits on the walls. The mistress of the house was called Della Rocca, but with all deference she gave a very bourgeois impression. The noble families of Naxos, grandiosely conscious of rank and tradition, have gradually been absorbed, without themselves noticing it, by the environment in which they have lived without contact with the world outside. A few family portraits together with houses which, on account of their vast proportions, are more uncomfortable than other people's, are really all that distinguish them from the tradesmen or handicraftsmen they hold in such contempt. Countess Della Rocca regretted that her husband was out on the family's farm, to which she was herself returning in the evening, but she asked us to be sure and look up her brother-in-law, who was a chemist down in the town. We easily found the Della Rocca chemist's, the only one in the town, and on chairs outside in the street we found the count and his countess. The chemist's assistant was told to bring out two more chairs and a profitable conversation ensued, interrupted now and then by a cus-

tomers who wanted some heart drops or indigestion medicine. The French Ursuline nuns also have a school on Naxos, so that almost every second inhabitant can speak French, and we had no difficulty in talking to the worthy chemist and his wife.

"It's true that there are a number of old families with Italian names still living here," the chemist confirmed. "But we look on ourselves as Greeks and there was no disloyal collaboration between us and the Italian occupation troops during the war. The vital question for us is one of money. We can no longer live on our small farms and here in the town there are practically no ways of earning a living for an educated class. A chemist, a doctor and two lawyers, that's about all. The others go to Athens or emigrate."

As we sat talking the Naxos people streamed past on the wide quay in a carefree throng, robust and sunburned. It was time for the evening stroll, and as in all Mediterranean cities the people were out enjoying the cool breeze before supper. It suddenly struck us that Count and Countess Della Rocca, in comparison with these sons and daughters of the people, looked frightfully thin, pale and woebegone, two shadows who were scarcely noticeable by the tall shop door. We thought of the professions the count had recently enumerated: a chemist, a doctor, two lawyers. The conquerors' last descendants live literally on the narrow margin left by the physical and mental infirmity of the oppressed—but in the long run victorious—strata of population: illness, crime, lawsuits.

Next morning a large white yacht entered the harbor, or rather a former yacht which had been derigged and equipped with a powerful engine. We had already seen it during the Feast of the Madonna at Tinos, where it lay among the flag-decked boats. It had then turned up one afternoon at Delos and we had talked to some of the passengers, among them two American film photographers. The boat was owned by a Greek and had a Greek crew, but had been chartered for the summer months by the Marshall Organization, which used it for going around to all the Greek islands



and spreading information—read: propaganda—among the population. Now, in Naxia's harbor, it dropped its anchor right across ours, which made us extremely critical of American Mediterranean policy, especially as a repulsive curly-headed Hercules type in swimming trunks began posing in film-star attitudes on the foredeck and a brisk march blared out over the water through a large loudspeaker. In the town we noticed with mixed feelings that we were taken for Marshall people; postcards suddenly cost twice as much and as we stood in the courtyard in front of the Orthodox cathedral the august bishop himself came out on the roof garden of the bishop's palace, asked in English what we thought of Naxos and declared that he would visit our boat in the afternoon. The only advantage our mistaken identity had was that one of the priests willingly stood under the cathedral bells and let himself be photographed with his beard fluttering in the wind.

According to the guidebook, Naxos is "the largest and most beautiful of the Cyclades," and it is certainly true that the wild, almost Corsican mountains, over three thousand feet high, in conjunction with an unusually rich vegetation in the valleys, make it more picturesque, more friendly than the severe, sterile islands that are its neighbors. We were tempted to make a trip to the interior of the island, but when on the morning of the third day the wind seemed unusually moderate—"a degenerate meltemia" according to the experts—we decided to start so as not to risk being held captive by the wind at Naxos for a whole week. We had a free wind westward inside a series of dangerous reefs which it is better to clear in daylight, then a following wind southward through the wide straits between Naxos and Paros. On the high, treeless coast of Paros we saw a large, white village, with a dense cluster of houses, and beneath it a whole flotilla of lofty-masted sailing ships lay moored in the lee of a small cape while people were working in the fields—a timeless Homeric sight which made us think of the famous portrayal of the countryside on Achilles' shield. The wind was dead

astern and we had to zigzag to avoid the risk of jibes in the heavy sea. The farther into the straits we came the more violent was the meltemia. *Daphne* sped forward at a dizzy speed between the fierce waves and we were beginning to feel somewhat uneasy. But once out on the open sea again the wind gradually abated and we settled down to enjoy ourselves. Far ahead we could make out the islands of Sikinos, Ios and Heraklia in the light haze and the Aegean Sea again seemed the best of sailing waters.

Just before sundown, when we had logged twenty nautical miles from Naxia, the wind suddenly dropped altogether. A madly irritating ground swell made the boom whine like a sledgehammer over our heads and the unbraced boat was slung roughly to and fro by the waves. We started the engine, but the disk of the sun had hardly disappeared in the wildly surging sea before the meltemia returned. In ten minutes it grew to hitherto untried strength and we flew through the swiftly falling darkness, driven by both sails and engine, which we did not dare stop in case we could not get it going again. This was no longer the best but the most treacherous of sailing waters and we had only one thought: to reach port as soon as possible. Ios' leading light blinked about seven nautical miles ahead. Could we reach it without damage to the rigging and then find our way through the breakers into a port completely unknown to us? Despite our speed of nearly nine knots the minutes were very long. At last in the inky darkness we could swing round the fearsomely thundering reef of the lighthouse point. With bleeding fingers I got our sails down in the raging head wind, for now we had to force our way into the harbor bay. The engine was working with every one of its 24 horsepower, but for long periods we made no headway at all and I listened with bated breath to every secondary sound from the overstrained Olympia. What would we have done if it had suddenly stopped? The long harbor inlet was as dark as pitch, but in the starlight we could just make out the steep coastline, which crawled past despite everything. We passed beneath a large white

church of fantastic shape and at last one or two faint lights glimmered ahead. Should we go still farther in? Suddenly a dark object loomed up right next to the bows: a caïque at anchor. We grabbed hold of it and made fast. The cruise was safely over and the homely lamp was lighted in the cozy cabin while Mona laid the table for dinner and everything was as delightful as only it can be when port is safely reached after a stormy voyage.

Ios is not one of the well-known tourist resorts of Greece, but the scenery of the little island has a charm which, in our eyes, surpassed that of Naxos, Mykonos and Tinos. The harbor inlet is spacious and one of the best in the Cyclades. It continues inland in the form of a small cultivated valley between bare hills, and on the shore are one or two old houses nestling among trees: the customs, a shop, two cafés. This is the *marina*, the harbor village, while the town itself, as on Sardinia and the Balearic Islands, is some little distance up in the hills so as not to be an easy prey for marauding pirate fleets. In a little book I had picked up in Athens I had read about the Turks' pillaging of Ios and I studied the area around the harbor with special interest. During the Middle Ages the island was famous for its lovely women, and the Turks used regularly to plunder Ios of beautiful slave girls for their harems. Once, the chronicler relates, there was a really virtuous girl on the island, and when the Turks came she hid, together with the other women, in a cave outside the town. The pirates hunted everywhere, but the Madonna caused some spiders to spin their webs quickly in front of the entrance to the hiding place and the Turks went past, convinced that no one had been in there for a long time. "But as a rule," the chronicler adds, "the Madonna did not find the Ios girls worthy of her help."

First thing in the morning we moved from our night's moorage out by the caïque up to the *marina*, where we made fast the stern

ropes to the veranda posts of one of the cafés, and the friendly proprietor immediately came on board with two cups of Turkish coffee by way of welcome. Ios charmed us from the first moment, both because of the population's Polynesian friendliness and the smallness of the island. It was a village kingdom encircled by the sea, and we got to know almost everybody on the island during the four days *Daphne* lay in the harbor. We could see everything here at a glance. A marble-paved zigzag road led up from the *marina* to the snow-white Town, we followed the Street and came to the Square. Here was the Café where we met the Schoolteacher, the Representative of the Steamship Company, the Postmaster, the Father Of A Successful Son In America, two or three Business Men, and the Village Idiot, who every now and then was sent to the Tobacco Kiosk to buy a packet of Papastratos No. 1. If we went on along the Street we came to the Post Office, and that was the end of the town: on the bare ridge there were twenty windmills grinding away so that the roofs rattled. Small churches lay dotted about the alleys and amid a jumble of steps and roofs was the Museum, which our friend the Schoolteacher, in his grudgingly acknowledged rank of curator, agreed to show us only after persistent entreaty. We understood his reluctance: the window shutters had not been opened for years, the roof had partly fallen in and birds had made their nests in the showcases among sacrificial bowls and idols. Even though they were not showpieces which had been neglected in this way, it is always a pity to see vases broken which a kindly fate has spared for two thousand years.

"Archeologists so seldom come here," the schoolteacher said by way of excuse.

A more edifying experience was a donkey ride which we undertook straight across the island past idyllic farms and through surprisingly fertile valleys to one of Homer's many graves. Why the great poet should be buried on Ios of all places is a mystery, but since time immemorial local tradition has pointed out a valley on

the island's east coast as his last resting place and we did not want to miss the chance of paying our homage to the writer of the *Odyssey* in a place which at least cannot be proved is *not* his grave. The positive evidence, on the other hand, must be taken at its face value: it is limited to a book published by the Dutch Baron Pasch van Krienen in the year 1773. He came to Ios as a naval officer with the Russian fleet, heard about the grave and decided to strike the world with amazement. The book relates how the baron, accompanied by one or two shepherds, found a large sarcophagus, opened it and found the two-and-a-half yard long skeleton of Homer which, however, crumbled to dust within a few hours on contact with the air—the whole thing corroborated by fellow-officers, the French consul, the village priest and God the Father himself. We for our part did not even manage to find the sarcophagus, which had clearly followed the skeleton into oblivion. There were only one or two stones, half buried in the ground, to give meager food to our imagination. But if the grave itself was negligible, the site was indeed worthy of Homer: a hillside sparsely covered by ancient olive trees, a rocky shore washed by the restless and treacherous sea, which was once placated by the sacrifice of Iphigenia but which for ten long years baffled Odysseus' hopes of his homecoming.

Another of the sights on Ios is the Persian-looking rather than Byzantine church of Hagia Irini, of which we caught a glimpse the same night we put into port. It was built in the 17th century and apart from its expressive architecture it has very beautiful, naive paintings on the iconostasis to offer anyone interested in art. One morning the temptation to take a photograph of *Daphne* sailing beneath this church was very strong and despite the meltemia I set out alone with the boat into the harbor while Mona took up her stand with the camera on a suitable lookout point. When I returned from this somewhat tricky expedition and was trying to make fast I was unexpectedly helped by a good-looking young man who spoke German and turned out to be from Cologne. His story,

which we heard by degrees, was worthy of his appearance: it sounded just like a serial in a magazine. As officer in the German army he had, after the English retreat, been made occupation commandant of Ios. The little island in its turn, however, had conquered him, partly through its geographical charm, partly through one of its daughters, who, in spite of the process of elimination under the Turks, was as fair as a lily. The commandant was soon so well disposed toward the people of Ios that the whole island was eating from the army stores; not a shot was ever fired on Ios and when the Germans finally evacuated the archipelago the commandant stayed behind, hidden by the girl's parents. He then married the girl, produced two children and lived a farmer's quiet and simple life in the valley inside the harbor inlet, which goes to show that the individual factor can still, in isolated cases, hold its own in a world which otherwise only reckons with categories and collective solutions.

The uncrowned king of Ios was a fabulously rich businessman called Artemis Denaxas, who had half moved back to his native island in his old age and built himself a large house just above the *marina*. The second morning we lay in port a little barefooted boy came down to the quay with a basket of freshly picked figs and a letter, which in elegant French invited us to "a simple dinner in our home," signed *Denaxas*. We accepted in an equally elegant letter, and at the appointed hour we presented ourselves in our best party dress. Mr. Denaxas turned out to be a Greek of the old school, at once a man of the world and a patriarch, white-haired and with immaculately pressed trousers. His house was ultra modern and furnished with impeccable taste. The contrast between this house, which might have been in Saint Cloud outside Paris or in San Remo, and the other houses on the island, where there was not a single toilet, bathroom, refrigerator, parquet floor or armchair, was overwhelming. Standing under the awnings on the large terrace in front of the living room we had the feeling that the whole island,

from the *marina* and the cultivated valley to the old town and the stony hills, was owned by Denaxas and formed a picturesque surrounding for the natural center his house comprised.

It was also rather amusing to watch from up here the big event of the steamer's twice-weekly arrival at Ios. As the time approached people from all over the island collected down by the *marina*: peasants in wide Turkish trousers, townspeople in straw hats and a horde of children. At the fore appeared the Postmaster and the Steamship Company's Representative, both adorned in white peaked caps. Suddenly the belching monster hove into sight behind the point, a flotilla of rowboats put out from the shore, the steamer anchored out in the roads and then began the tossing of the cargo into the sea, described by so many travelers to Greece. Everything that floated, from barrels and trusses of hay to live donkeys and sheep, was thrown into the water and by degrees made its way to land, while the rowboats, amidst general hubbub and confusion, took the passengers—soldiers on leave, women with strangely transparent veils over their faces, bearded priests and mere mortals—ashore. The mailbags were exchanged, a barrel of beer—the height of luxury in Greece—was lowered down into the post boat for the Denaxas family, a diabolical din filled the bay, and while the two dignitaries in their white caps were rowed back, standing proudly in the stern of the last rowboat, small persevering donkeys began bearing priests, veiled women, luggage and bales up the white marble road to the town, everyone else following on foot.

The evening in the Denaxas' villa was pleasant and unconstrained. The head of the family told us of his attempts to raise the peasants' living standard by introducing modern agricultural methods on the island and Mrs. Denaxas, who was born on the neighboring island of Santorin, described conditions during the hard war years when all shipping between the islands and Athens was carried on by small caïques across the mined sea. Apart from the family there were several guests from Athens at the dinner and

we sat on the terrace quite late into the warm night, talking of life on the islands. Mr. Denaxas, who was an old yachtsman, gave us valuable nautical tips and when we parted predicted continued meltemia for the morrow.

Sure enough, the wind howled in the rigging all night and in the morning there was no need to discuss our possible departure, only to reinforce the mooring ropes. Three small steamers came into the harbor inlet for shelter, for the meltemia is not to be trifled with even by motor-driven ships. At about ten o'clock the Marshall boat came in. It had paid a visit to Amorgos and Sikinos since we had seen it last and the captain reported a very rough sea outside. He came on board *Daphne* to tell us about the harbors during the rest of our cruise and to mark on our charts the minefields around Crete, of which we were in blissful ignorance. Then we visited his boat, the *Toscana*, which he was touchingly proud of. Before the war he had been a rich man and the boat had been a stately schooner in which he had made pleasure cruises in the Mediterranean. Now the *Toscana* was a derigged motor yacht and he himself made his living as its captain on chartered cruises—during the last two years for the Marshall Organization. We got to know two of the American Marshall men, sons of Greek emigrants and filled with the desire to help their fathers' land. In the winter they worked at the head office in Athens, but during the summer months they made cruises to all the Greek islands—a rather enviable job, a fact of which they themselves were aware. The visits to the various ports took the following form: first small calendars and sealed envelopes were handed out to the population as they crowded around. The calendars contained a brief account of the Marshall Organization and its work in Greece and the rest of Europe; the envelopes contained a set of large and small fishhooks of stainless steel bearing the inscription: "A small gift from America." Then large cardboard panels were carried ashore on which photographs with explanatory texts were pasted and the Greek rehabilitation work with Marshall



aid was described, an overwhelming illustration of the generosity of which American idealism is capable. In the evening there was an open-air film show, both cartoons and a pictorial record of dams and military parades in America, a very active propaganda, but it was blowing so hard on Ios this day that the cardboard panels could not be set up in the square, "for the first time in a three months' cruise," the captain explained. Instead, we took part in another item in the program: the schoolteacher, the priest, the postmaster and about ten other representatives of the population gathered in Mr. Denaxas' villa and were invited to state their wishes to the Marshall men. Did Ios need a new school, a cottage hospital, a harbor jetty or a quay? What was the most vital need on the island? Within a year the matter would be attended to as a gift from America. When one thinks that the same offer was made in every place the boat visited and in countless villages on the mainland, one realizes that the United States is spending no small sum on putting Greece on its feet again after the war.

The Marshall boat's next port of call was Santorin, where we were also bound. The kind Greek captain suggested that we should set sail an hour ahead of the much faster *Toscana*, so that we would be in touch halfway between the islands. He was going to start late at night, when the wind is, as a rule, at its weakest. The worthy captain evidently felt both anxious and responsible for us, in spite—or perhaps because—of our having described our earlier experiences to him. The chance of having a "big brother" to turn to for once was at any rate very welcome, and we accepted his offer with gratitude. Our longing to move on was also great: all we had heard of Santorin filled us with curiosity and excitement.

## THE MYSTERIOUS ISLAND

THE BLUSTERING wind whined in the rigging and from out at sea a muffled, threatening roar could be heard through the darkness as we tumbled out of our bunks at the sound of the alarm clock and resumed contact with our adventure. The *Toscana* was still asleep, dark and motionless under the stars, safe with her powerful engines and crew of six. At such moments the long-distance yachtsman examines himself and wonders whether he is equal to his self-chosen destiny. If he happens to have a wife who spontaneously and candidly speaks her mind and puts her feminine anxiety into words, he at least is spared uttering his cowardly thoughts aloud. Confidently and resolutely he says instead:

"We can't lie here for weeks, we *must* go on. And the wind is not nearly so strong as it was yesterday."

Even as we ran out before the wind beneath Hagia Irini's silhouette, with only our storm mainsail up, I noticed that the latter statement was much truer than I had thought. The wind was abating and outside the harbor inlet we encountered more sea than wind. We hoisted one sail after the other and thought even so that our speed, checked by the huge waves, was poor. Seldom have we had less cause for anxiety than on this morning. The dawn came with southern abruptness and in its wan light we saw the Marshall boat heading after us, rolling heavily. It passed not a boat length away, I photographed it and the captain waved encouragingly. In half an hour it had vanished ahead of us in the direction of the tall silhouette we were making for, our next eagerly awaited harbor.

It is not only in Jules Verne's novels that there are mysterious

islands, pregnant with the double mystery imparted by a shoreless sea and volcanic forces. One real island, at least, surpasses all that literature has been able to fabricate in that way: Santorin. To steer through the early morning sunshine into its wide lagoon from the surging Aegean Sea, like an explorer in your own ship—suddenly to see its black lava walls on all sides rising sheer to dizzy heights, with small white villages hanging over the abyss like foam on vast congealed waves—is an experience which makes even a blasé and widely traveled man feel like a fourteen-year-old boy again. Here the silence is as loud as in a powder-magazine, the desolation is full of vanished life, and in the volcanic harbor inventor-pirates trim their glinting submarines in inaccessible sea caves.

Even to a more sober observer Santorin is a remarkable place, well known to all volcanists. Apart from Krakatao in the Pacific it is the only island known to have literally exploded. In the dawn of time it was called Kalliste, i.e. "The very beautiful," or Strongyle, "The round," and was a circular island with a central crater cone and fertile, cultivated slopes which went gently down to the sea on all sides—in fact, rather like Stromboli as we know it today. About two thousand years B.C. there was a great catastrophe: the entire middle part of the island exploded and partly sank into the sea, so that an oval abyss, more than six miles wide, gaped open, into which the sea poured through a huge breach in the southeast; the eruption was so violent that islands in the Cyclades far distant were covered with ash and pumice. When new settlers ventured to the place in due course they found only a ruin of the old Kalliste, a ring with plateaus which still sloped gently down to the sea and which soon yielded just as abundant grape and olive harvests as before; but in toward the newly formed lagoon, or Kaldeira, as it is called, a perpendicular abyss and a terrifying void. Since then the island has always been inhabited, even though new eruptions have sundered the ring into three smaller islands with a gut between each, new islands have risen out of the depths and the southern

part of the main island with the port of Eleusis has been swallowed up by the sea. The ancient name of Thera was changed during the Middle Ages to Santa Irini, whence the present name of Santorin. In the 19th century a snow-white island of marble, obviously a piece of the sea bed, rose up out in the Kaldeira, but vanished after some years, and the little island—Kaimeni—which now marks the active crater, got its present appearance during the most recent eruption in 1930.

Fira, the chief town of Santorin, has about 600 inhabitants and is situated on the largest of the periphery islands. To reach it you steer obliquely across the lagoon beneath the village of Epanomeria, pass old Skaros, where the Venetians had their capital during the centuries they were lords of the island, and finally reach a small rock shelf cut out of the actual crater wall. As the rock continues just as sheer below the water as above it and the average depth inside the Kaldeira is a thousand feet, you cannot anchor at Santorin. Fortunately two fishermen came rowing out to help us land; in the heavy swell it would have been impossible to make fast direct to the quay. Under their supervision the anchor and the whole chain, nearly 250 feet, was paid out so that it hung plumb down; as we drew in of course it did not grip, but owing to the slope of the crater wall it did keep the boat a few yards from land and two ropes could be made fast to projecting points high up on the lava wall. The Marshall boat was moored to the large buoy anchored outside the harbor for passenger boats, but we did not envy it, as we should never have been able to get ashore from out there through the breakers in our little dinghy. In addition, we would have had to keep permanent watch in case a larger boat claimed the place.

Once moored we had a swim: the sight of Fira a thousand feet above our heads, literally hanging down over the mast tops, was fantastic, but a really horrible sensation awaited us when we put on our diving masks, those toys so popular in Italy and France with whose help you can see and breathe under water. The first look down

through the crystal-clear depths was so spine-chilling that after only a moment I was forced to lift my head up into the brighter and safer world above water. I then changed myself into a new Icarus, floating about at will over the sucking abyss, into which it seemed I must hurtle at any moment. The Mediterranean water is so transparent that it is quite easy to see objects at a depth of 150 feet, and I saw now, as clearly as through the air, a precipice covered with seaweed. Shoals of fish hovered about it, glistening in the sunshine at different levels, while shells, rusty chains and everything that sinks to the bottom in a harbor lay strewn about in the crevices. But the surprise that made our blood run cold was the huge, plainly visible hull of a warship—a bombed Italian destroyer, still manned by its dead crew, as we found out later. With its guns pointing despairingly toward the sky and its bows sharply tilting into the dark depths, it had stuck on a projecting crag, where it balanced precariously. I wondered for a moment what would have happened if our anchor had got caught in the hull which, for some reason, had continued its fated course downward, towing us right to the gates of hell . . . A needless worry—the anchor lay two yards to the side.

A zigzag flight of steps, cut out of the rock, leads up from the harbor to the town. As the height is the same as up to the top of the Eiffel Tower, one is not adverse to using one of the animals which a whole horde of donkey drivers, competing wildly with each other, offer the traveler down on the quay—even if a donkey's well-known fondness for always walking on the extreme edge of a precipice is especially marked on Santorin. Once up there, however, all dread speculation as to whether even donkeys cannot sometimes make a mistake is forgotten. What makes the most striking effect on the tourist is the audacious way the villages have been placed above the abyss like swallows' nests, and the delight of strolling along the winding marble streets of Fira never palls—they are bright, well built and incredibly clean. At every step you look out between snow-

white church cupolas and the barrel-vaulted roof tops over the Kaldeira's black expanse of water and the mighty twisting of the crater coast with the neighboring villages fading into the haze.

Why is Santorin, which in the matter of scenic extravagance far surpasses an island like Capri, not one of Europe's most frequented tourist resorts? The main reason for its obscurity, of course, is its position, off the beaten track in a poor and undeveloped country. Even so we were rather surprised to hear at the only hotel on the island that there was not another tourist on the whole of Santorin. When we first arrived in Fira we had noticed the inviting name of VULCAN HOTEL written up in huge letters on the front of a house. The hotel was a large private house built in typical Santorin style and was extremely pleasant, apart from the minor detail that the proprietors were a trifle unhinged and decrepit. The wife, a little white-haired German woman, tiptoed discreetly round the spotlessly clean rooms attending to imagined guests, the husband was a Constantinople Greek who bore a striking resemblance to the caricatures of old schoolteachers so often seen in French films: lean and gnomelike, with a white imperial, a permanent beret and a fiery temperament which flared up for no reason at all. He found it very hard at first to grasp that in our capacity as foreign journalists we wanted to find out what chances there were of getting hotel rooms and food on Santorin, but that we ourselves were spending the night on our boat. He read attentively through our letter of introduction—rather worn by now—from the Greek minister in Stockholm, then suddenly the light dawned. We went the rounds of the weirdly empty hotel. The rooms were pleasant, homely and unpretentious, with English iron bedsteads and a view over the Kaldeira. Then the old man took down the hotel's register, declaring:

"Do you mind if I in my turn ask a few questions? Name and date of birth? Profession? Number of passport?"

They were the usual questions when registering at a hotel and we repeated that we were not going to put up there.

"That doesn't matter," he replied. "I'm an orderly man and like to use the register. Now then: Last place of residence? Destination?"

But after these normal questions he passed on to more fanciful ones: knowledge of languages, what church we belonged to and as a summing-up he printed the following lines about me in his book, spelling aloud in French: "Collects archeological impressions together with beauty. Travels on a frigate which his wife handles. Unshaven." As we were about to go he gave a little patriotic lecture, getting more and more excited and finishing up: "Greece has therefore never been subdued, because at the time of the Turks there were free Armatoles up in the mountains and during the last war I flew the Greek flag every day on my writing desk." We were already some way down the street when he came running after us and asked me to tell the Greek minister in Stockholm how very much he approved of the excellent idea of sending us out to inspect the hotels.

According to the guidebook, Fira has a museum, and sure enough in the main street we found a building which, with its monumental flight of steps and its tall, barred windows, could hardly be anything else. But the door surprised us: it was nailed up with stout boards and through the broken window panes we could see appalling disorder. Where was the caretaker? A boy promised to show me the way and, leaving Mona at the museum, we set off. He answered my question "*Makria apeto?*" (Long way?) by shaking his head, but we were soon out on the wide plain, with vineyards in all directions and not a house in sight. The boy merely laughed at my further questions and pointed ahead. After walking for half an hour we suddenly stood on the edge of a ravine which the rain had scooped out of the plain, and there, sheltered from the wind, lay a strange troglodyte village with the houses cut out of the perpendicular tufa walls of the gully and their whitewashed fronts facing the dried-up stream, which was also the village street. The only build-

ing which rose a few yards above the level of the surrounding ground was the church, built of blocks of pumice stone and with a splendid cupola. The museum caretaker was not at home but at the café. He was a decent middle-aged man, who first said that the museum had been shut ever since the war; after perusing the ministerial letter and imbibing three glasses of *ouzo*, however, he promised to let us in. He had a cycle, which greatly surprised me, as the road was negotiable only by pedestrians and donkeys, but he carried it doggedly three-quarters of the way in to town. Only for a few yards at a time could he roll along, and then he beamed with pride.

"Down toward Perissa there's a sandy beach where you can cycle quite well," he declared. "My son and I take the cycle down there sometimes on the donkey so as to have a really good ride."

When I rejoined Mona outside the museum after two hours' absence there had been great happenings. The Marshall boat had gone on to the next port, Milo, and a steamer like an old-fashioned yacht had tied up at the buoy instead. About a hundred young Americans were now conveyed by tenacious donkeys up to Fira, which soon echoed with broad American speech, the whirring of film cameras and youthful larking. Mona, who had been talking to some of the new arrivals, told me that it was a Greek boat which had been chartered by the American School of Archeology in Athens. For 410 dollars, the students and others who were interested had, in the space of a fortnight, "done" everything classical from Constantinople in the north to Cyprus and Crete in the south, from Ephesus in the east to Olympia and Corfu in the west, to say nothing of Delphi, Corinth, Sparta, Troy, Rhodes etc. Why they had not taken in Italy and Egypt as well in their fortnight's itinerary remained a mystery to us. They were going to fit in Delos the same day and so had only two hours in Santorin. The museum caretaker opened the lower panel of the nailed-up door, we crept in on all fours after him and a procession of Americans followed on our heels. I never really found out what had



happened to the museum during the war; it had had a good shaking up at any rate, perhaps in connection with some bomb's exploding near by, for everything was there, but in an indescribable mess. Tall glass cupboards with pitchers and terra-cotta objects had fallen over, the contents lay strewn about the floor and everything was smothered in a thick layer of dust; if you picked up something at random out of the jumble and blew on it, a little aryballos or a Helladic idol became visible. The museum's material dates chiefly from the excavations of the island's ancient capital, Thera, and some of it is very valuable. The sight of the obvious neglect evidently had a demoralizing effect on the visitors. When we crept out again one by one through the door-panel under the supervision of the caretaker I could not help thinking of the scene in Topelius' moral play "The Pearl of Truth," in which the children creep up out of the Well of Truth.

"Will you kindly give back what you have in your pockets," the caretaker said to each one in a gentle voice.

In very few cases was the request without result and to those who had resisted temptation the caretaker, as in the really moral tales, gave something of what the others had stolen. In this way we, rather embarrassed, got only one souvenir to take back to *Daphne*, but—as the skipper unmorally philosophized afterward—it made no difference to us whether the control was carried out or not: in neither case would we have been left without.

While Mona had been waiting for me to come back from the village with the caretaker she had thoroughly explored the quarter around the museum and had made a real discovery. Santorin is at present suffering from a heavy depopulation; Athens, with its better chances of earning a livelihood, is attracting more and more of the island's inhabitants. Abandoned houses are to be seen everywhere, and certain villages, such as Merovigli north of Fira, are almost extinct. Mona had now come across an extraordinary building with a large terrace, part of which formed the roof of a church

underneath. The house consisted of a whole series of whitewashed rooms with barrel-vaulted ceilings, the typical method of building on Santorin, where there is neither wood for rafters nor iron girders, only light blocks of pumice stone which can be cut into wedge-shaped building blocks. Below the largest of the rooms was a huge water cistern, for there is not a drop of well water on the island and the only water available is what can be collected during the winter's short but heavy rain. A family's wealth is gauged down here largely by how much water it owns, and now, after an unusually dry year, we were amazed to find that water cost more per liter than wine. The cistern under the deserted house had been emptied to the last drop; obviously the inhabitants had sold the water before leaving. The view from the windows and especially from the terrace was fantastic: the whole of the Kaldeira lay beneath our feet and on either side we saw a large part of Fira. The cupola of the church formed a globe on the terrace and through a window we looked straight down on to the main altar. While we were admiring all this the brother of the owner who had gone away, Evangelos Sorotos, appeared on the scene. For the equivalent of \$200 we could buy the whole show: terrace, five rooms, two kitchens and an inner courtyard. The temptation was almost irresistible, but what on earth should we do with a house on Santorin? The harbor was utterly unsuitable for *Daphne*, the distance home to Scandinavia was another deterrent, and the dismal knowledge that this short life is one of choice and renunciation made us, after a feverish and painful twenty-four hours, listen to common sense. But it still happens sometimes that we gaze longingly at the photographs of the little house in the dazzling sunshine and talk of writing to Evangelos Sorotos.

Santorin, which to the eye of the modern visitor is one of the loveliest spots in Greece, is very apt to start one musing on the

way man's attitude to landscape has changed since ancient times. How did the ancient Greeks apprehend a place like Santorin's Kaldeira? As far as I know, there is no direct evidence extant, but it can be assumed that the volcanic lake during antiquity could only arouse horror, uneasiness and thoughts of Odysseus' voyage to the gates of Hades. The island dwellers in those days kept to the natural sea coast or the plain, from which nothing of the Kaldeira could be seen. It was probably reasons of defense during the pirate centuries of the Middle Ages which made the villages withdraw to the brink of the abyss which had formerly been the island's dread *hinterland* and untold secret. It was also, no doubt, easier for the people of the Middle Ages to live in this sublime, half infernal environment, on the borderline between good and evil, in immediate contact with the giddy height dimension and infinitude which found architectural expression in Gothic. But it was not until the 19th century that Santorin's crater jaws began to be regarded as one of the most beautiful views in all Greece and were really discovered as a tourist resort.

All this brings us to the question: did the ancients have a sense of nature's beauty or were they so centered around man that sea, sunrises, majestic mountains and foaming wave crests left them unmoved? The lack of landscape painting as a special art form during pre-Hellenistic times, the dearth of pure descriptions of scenery in literature and the strange custom of presenting everything in the shape of human allegories—trees as dryads, rivers as recumbent men, the sun as a golden chariot—these and other factors gave me at least the idea that the Greeks were less sensitive to the nuances to which our modern craze for scenery has made us susceptible. After the landscapes of the Dutch, English and French impressionists I was not expecting any new revelations of the beauty of nature when I began studying Greek art, only revelations of ethic and intellectual art. My surprise was all the greater, therefore, when I stood in front of the driver representing the rising sun in the

Parthenon's east gable and realized that this was the most majestic and resplendent portrayal of a sunrise at sea ever produced in the history of art. The human figure here is only the medium for an unusually vivid scenic representation which reveals a receptivity and sense of form compared with which Turner's sunsets lack all splendor and grandeur. Once you become alive to this—that the Greeks clothed their experiences of natural scenery in the language of which they have such a superb mastery, the human form's scale of expression—you no longer accuse the ancients of not loving nature. Instead, you begin to imbibe with increasing admiration everything that recently seemed mere empty allegories, from Homer's graphic description of "the rosy-fingered dawn" to the seascape, the picture of sea wind, ships in full sail and curling waves which the "Victory of Samothrace" conjures up, or the vigorous description of the seasons and the weather contained in the eight personifications of wind on the Tower of the Winds in Athens.

It is not hard for us to perceive a connection between man's gestures and emotions on the one hand and nature's life on the other, as we experience these two spheres in indissoluble connection with each other. When we see the storm driving big waves in to the coast or roaring in the tree tops we think of the passions struggling, and all our landscape painting illustrates Amiel's theory: that landscape is a state of mind. In that case we resemble the Greeks, in that we pendulate between nature and man, letting one represent the other. The big difference lies in the direction the change takes: with the Greeks, a consistent translation from nature's language to man's, with us the exact opposite. The Greeks conceived rivers and seas, mountains and trees, rain and sunshine as human figures and human actions. In this way they measured everything by a human scale and the result was a world in which man was completely at home. This change concerned not only the individual impressions of scenery, but the whole of existence: while

religion made the gods into men, the philosophers discovered that each individual has his own inner "nature," and Plato transferred the state to man's soul, building the soul-state which acquired such a fundamental importance for Christianity. This translation from without inward, this recharging on a single point of all the life that had been scattered in the cosmos, created the western man on whose collected riches we are still living.

The change in mental outlook brought about by Christianity meant that the conception of the universe concentrated around man was replaced by one with God as the center: everything now was measured by God's scale. But the Christian God had nevertheless taken on quite strong human features, and humanism still lived on as a mighty undercurrent. The real turning point came only with romanticism, which introduced an entirely new principle of change. From the given centers, God and man, from the treasures where all the world's riches had been collected and arranged, a beginning was made to give back to nature what had been taken away from it. All that had been subservient now acquired a sovereign value of its own, and the values that had formerly been paramount had to make do by themselves. The palmy days of romanticism may long since have passed away, but to all intents and purposes its spirit is still with us, whether we like it or not. In our modern world the human and the divine is hampered by a strange paralysis. During the Middle Ages people spoke of God and the Madonna in a natural, matter-of-fact way in all life's ups and downs; people today find it hard, almost impossible in fact, to utter God's name even at serious moments. The simplest soap-box orator in ancient Greece referred authoritatively to man's dignity; our present-day humanist, for all his good intentions, cannot help being a puffed-up and ridiculous person. The only domains which are alive to us are the external ones: in the clouds drifting across the grimy roofs of cities or the thrill of speed on the asphalt of the *autostradas* our taste for freedom is aroused; we climb high moun-

tains to meet the God resolved again in nature and we set out on sailing cruises in order to find an outlet for stifled moral aspirations by gliding along over a medium as deep and mirror-like as consciousness. Modern art bears clear witness to this flight from the arid human and divine world to the living but incoherent nature. Landscape painting, already mentioned, has developed into a tendency which, by its pure line and color, tries to realize a completely inhuman painting. As for poetry, the symbols of the primeval forest, the stars, the rivers and the sea, have quite got the upper hand; and surrealism has raised the translation outward toward chaos to the actual principle of poetry. This process, which has now been going on for a century and a half, is slowly but surely bearing fruit, and the results are there for all to see: year by year the world has become more and more incoherent and its disordered elements more powerful, while man has shrunk and God has faded away. If this process continues, nothing will be measured by man or by God, but instead we shall be measured by everything.

This is just what happens when faced with Santorin's Kaldeira: the feeling of being measured by cosmic forces, of being changed into volcano, sea and sky. The fact that we gladly let it happen, even journey far across the seas to experience it, shows that we have long since betrayed the man within us.

Perhaps the best way of describing Santorin is to say that it has two completely different faces, depending on where you see it from. Seen from the Kaldeira it is nothing but a volcano, with not a speck of vegetation and with the white border of the villages looking like something paradoxical and half unreal. But from the plain it is all fertile soil and endless vineyards, broken here and there by small villages with cupola churches and windmills. Seen from here, Santorin is friendly Cycladian farming land, and you must go right to the brink of the abyss to find the reality be-

neath the smiling illusion. The chief sight from the plateau side is the ruins of ancient Thera, which we set out to find early one morning. According to the guidebook the trip takes ten hours by mule, but we toiled on foot for seventeen hours—quite a well-filled day.

We climbed up to Fira at dawn and left the town by the sandy road leading south along the edge of the abyss. The sun had already risen across the vineyards on the plain and we passed a steady stream of farmers and townsmen. They were all mounted and had a train of pack animals laden with bags and farm produce, from which we inferred that it was combined steamer and market day in Fira. After walking for an hour we came to Santorin's leper colony, a place whose pathos, crying aloud to heaven, is possible only in the South, where inner reality so readily assumes an outward guise. Here, on a rock shelf in the actual crater wall, shut off from all sight of the cultivated plain which was once their home and exiled to a cosmic space of unearthly harshness, human creatures were being slowly eaten away by their implacable disease, covering themselves from the summer sun and the winter rain in holes which they had themselves scraped out of the tufa wall and living on food which kind-hearted fellow humans lowered down to them in baskets. Being market day, a lot of bread and bunches of ripe grapes found their way down to the doomed. Not far from the leper colony we left the abyss and labored up between the vineyards to the large and prosperous village of Pyrgos. Here a veritable Jacob's Ladder began, a stone-paved flight of steps leading up to the top of Santorin's highest mountain, where, at a height of nearly two thousand feet, a monastery dedicated to the heaven-bound prophet Elijah has been established, as on countless other mountains in Greece. It was like a catapult of the soul, an ingenious invention leaving far behind it the ordinary, earthbound monasteries' laborious runways for the soul's flight to Paradise Airport. From its stone socle the dead monks could swing themselves up with ease

straight to the near-by heaven, and the monastery's position meant much better communications for the angels as well, so that the difficult work of building it, the monks' hard-working life and the pilgrims' plodding climb are of minor account. The whole massive building seemed deserted when at last we got up there in the blazing noonday heat, but we had hardly tugged at the bell rope before the doorkeeper's judas window was opened by a monk so bearded and shaggy that a pair of beady eyes were all that could be seen between the tufts of gray hair. A moment later, as is customary in Greece, we were asked into the reception room, where we had time to admire in peace and quiet the fantastic 19th century furniture and daguerreotypes of metropolitans long since dead, before the august igumen of the monastery came in. He was approaching ninety without a doubt and spoke nothing but Greek, but that did not make the kindness and the compulsory refreshment any the less. We were given Turkish sweets, so-called *loukoums*, and a liqueur so strong that one small glass made our already wobbly legs fold up completely. We had to rest for a whole hour outside the monastery under a fig tree groaning with fruit before we could go on to the ruins of ancient Thera, picking our way over pathless mountain ridges, our feet sinking deep into pumice gravel at every step.

This town, which was built by the Dorians in the 9th century B.C. and which, during the Hellenistic age, was an important naval base for the Egyptian Ptolemies is—thanks to its position on a high cliff jutting out into the sea, its utter abandonment and its miniature collection of all the stage properties marking a normal ancient city—one of the most fascinating collections of ruins on classic ground. There are temples and cult centers, a gymnasium and theater, a square with surrounding colonnade, stone-paved streets, villas with mosaic floors and water cisterns, the military governor's palace and the hetaera's house—all more or less level with the ground but easy for the imagination to reconstruct. Yet



greatly as one is inspired to go back more than two thousand years in time, the thought of what an experience the actual excavation of Thera must have been is equally fascinating. I know little about Baron Hiller von Gärtringen except that he was a wealthy German archeologist who himself paid for and led the extensive work, but this man—who on his own account laid out the large archeological province called Thera and who, during a ten years' stay on the island just before the turn of the century, slowly brought the forgotten city back to life—must certainly have experienced something more than scientific satisfaction. The whole of Santorin, with its past and present, with its surging shores, white villages, friendly people and volcanic secrets, must have become his in a far deeper sense than is inherent in any material ownership or position of political rule.

There are no human habitations near Thera, but the rumor that the island's sole tourists were making for the ruined city had evidently spread in some mysterious way, for when we reached the cape we were met by an old man who said he was custodian of the place. He did not look a day under eighty and had walked for four hours in the blazing sun along mountain paths from his village in the hope of earning an honest penny as a guide. Even if I usually prefer to see historic places and works of art on my own or with the help of a good guidebook and its factual information, I had not the heart to rebuff him. He began by taking us to the church of Hagios Stephanos, an unassuming miniature church built in the ruins of an ancient building. Inside in the cool he had laid out some fresh figs on a block of marble and placed an amphora of water which he had brought with him—a little meal which we ate as solemnly as a communion under the hieratic gaze of the icons. In his youth the old man had taken part in Hiller von Gärtringen's excavations and we keenly regretted not being able to talk to him properly, as he only spoke a Greek island dialect. As at Mycenae, the ground was strewn with potsherds and we behaved

like children on a pebbly beach. The old man laughed at our enthusiasm over every sherd with any trace of painting or relief, and when we reached the Roman theater, embedded among stone pines, by the chasm yawning to the sea, he vanished into a cave and came back with a small, perfectly whole terra-cotta vase with a very faded red design. "*Ime arkeologos,*" (I'm an archeologist) he said mysteriously, presenting the find to Mona.

Right out on the cliff, a thousand feet above sea level, is Apollo Karneios' archaic cult place and terrace, where the annual Gymnopaedics were celebrated with dancing by naked youths. On the rocks the spectators have carved gods' names alternating with the names of handsome boy dancers, the whole thing spiced with passionate words of love. By an ironic fate, these improvised expressions of Lacedemonian boy-love, formed in the ecstasy of the moment, are the oldest existing monuments of Greek writing, from which our own alphabet has developed. From this terrace it is possible on clear days to see as far as Crete in the south, but we again found out that the descriptions in travel literature of the clear Greek air must refer to other seasons than the summer, when the sun envelops all in a golden haze.

Having duly remunerated the old man for his services, including the conjuring up of the little vase, we clambered down a difficult zigzag path to the beach south of the Thera cliff. This was where the ancient harbor must have been, but all we found was a sandy beach stretching for miles. In Greece you get spoiled in the matter of Elysian bathing places, but this beach—where wild grapes hung in ripe clusters beneath Thera's rugged cliff and the sound of the waves merged with the quivering sunlight, the heat and the fresh, salty tang of the air into a joint rapture of the five senses—was without a doubt one of the most memorable of the whole voyage. Our way home brought us to Stavros, a huge cupola church built during the 19th century near the lonely beach as a result of a farmer's dreams and visions, one of the innumerable pilgrim

churches with which Greece abounds and which annually musters large crowds of people on its special feast days but stands empty otherwise. An hour's walk farther on along the sandy road we found a small ancient temple, called Marmarina, which had been turned into a Christian church. Unlike most ancient temples, of which only the columns have been preserved, here it was the cella, built of marble ashlar, with the ancient roof which were still standing, while the columns were missing. All the way home we walked through an unbroken vineyard, where the grapes hung in sweet, ripe clusters, aromatic as they can be only on volcanic islands. Sustained by this inexhaustible supply of food, we at last reached Fira in the dark and climbed down on aching feet to our floating home in the black Kaldeira.

We spent next morning getting ready to leave. We filled our ship's cask with delicious Santorin wine at 10¢ a liter, paid a farewell visit to "our" house by the museum and even had time for an excursion to the neighboring village of Merovigli, a mile or so to the north. Its position is just as fantastic as Fira's, but it is half deserted and full of abandoned houses, pitiful evidence that "the flight from the countryside" is a serious problem even in Greece. The houses nearest the brink of the precipice have also been abandoned for fear of the ground's giving way. Of the old Skaros close by, only a narrow jutting cliff remains, and where resplendent crusaders once held court and Venetian merchants lived in stately houses, nowadays a handful of sheep can barely find foothold. Toward the end of the 19th century the last inhabitants in the Venetian town, the nuns in a convent of a closed order, had to save themselves helter-skelter when their house slithered down into the Kaldeira during a minor earthquake. Most of Santorin's 150 surviving Catholics now live, together with their bishop, in Fira.

At about noon we hoisted our sails and steered over to the island of Kaimeni right out in the Kaldeira, the scene of the latest eruption. We anchored there in a little bay which, according to the

fishermen in Fira, was the only safe harbor for small boats on the whole of Santorin. We had no reason to doubt that it was safe from storms, but it was far from being an idyllic anchorage. Kaimeni is quite uninhabited, there is not a shrub or a blade of grass to be seen, and the island looks exactly like a heap of coke magnified a thousand times. As a rule Mona is keen on going off to explore new places, but this time the captain had to listen to some harsh words from a mutinous crew, who insisted on returning instantly to the human world. I was told that an interest in volcanoes is a sign of clinging childishly to the boyhood world of steam engines and toy pistols and that Kaimeni was a horrid, odious place which no woman in the world would visit of her own free will. In the face of this concerted attack by all the world's women I thought it best to beat a retreat to the volcano. As Mona still refused vehemently to have anything to do with the crater, I rowed ashore in the dinghy alone. Kaimeni is no ordinary ground, and if you land on its shores you must move with great caution, as in places the ground is so hot that you can light a cigarette against the rock and the air reeks of sulphurous fumes which sometimes are horribly like rotten eggs. There is no particular crater opening, but it steams and seethes all over the place. In addition the terrain is very heavy going, consisting as it does of nothing but huge boulders hurled haphazardly, and after only an hour I returned to a wife who greeted me as one risen from the dead. Perhaps all the world's women again had a hand in it, for now it was all sunshine, forgiveness and forbearance with the follies in which man's boyish spirits involve him. I was also surprised to receive such willing help with the next plan I hit on. The Santorin fishermen had told me that in order to remove barnacles and vegetation from their boats they used to take them to one of the bays on Kaimeni's north coast, where a hot sulphur spring runs out. *Daphne* was in urgent need of a scraping and so we decided it was worth trying. We found the bay easily, as the yellow color of the water showed us the right

spot from afar. We steered in carefully among the hot sulphur fumes and waited for half an hour. The result was miraculous: when we regained clear water our ship was as smooth and clean under the water line as after an expensive and lengthy scraping, but the temperature in the cabin was 140° F.

When we had anchored again in our former bay and, after the Turkish bath on board, wanted to cool off with a dip in the sea, we found to our surprise that here too the water was abnormally warm. Evidently the bay had its own hot spring; not opaque like porridge and orange colored as the other one, but so clear that it mixed imperceptibly with the sea-water. Astonished, delighted and curious, we splashed about for a long time to find out the spring's peculiarities. The water was almost scalding nearest the spot where it ran out, but further away it was the temperature of a hot bath, lying like a stratum above the ordinary cold sea water, which we could feel if we stuck our feet down a little deeper.

It was not merely the oppressive heat on board which kept us from sleeping that night. The darkness, the weird isolation far away from other people and the silence of this place, which was literally a gateway to the underworld, all this was woven together in our thoughts with unease about the treachery of the sea and wind during the cruise over to Crete which we thought of starting early the following morning. It is difficult to sleep in peace in a world where all four elements are suddenly not to be trusted and the only refuge one has is a fragile cockleshell like our *Daphne*. By two o'clock in the morning we had had enough: just as well to start at once as lie there sleepless. Half an hour later *Daphne*, borne on a gentle night wind, was gliding out of the Kaldeira's mammoth jaws, a gray phantom which was soon swallowed up by the vast, black, but nevertheless infinitely safer sea. When the sun rose, the mysterious island lay far behind us on the horizon like a blue shield lifted above the waves.

## CRETE

WE SET THE storm sail and lashed the wine cask under the saloon table, thinking that the meltemia would waken after sunrise. But the sun's fiery ball rolled higher and higher above the sea and only a gentle westerly breeze softly filled our sails. By and by, when it was obvious that the north wind had taken the day off, we ventured to set the balloon jib; for hour after hour we were wafted along among dense shoals of flying fish over this sea into which Icarus fell. Not a ship hove in sight all day, but by two o'clock the first high peaks emerged beyond the waves: Crete lay ahead of us. We devoted the day to bookish matters; Mona read Gide's *Thésée* with its subtle retelling of the legends of Minos, Theseus, the Labyrinth and Ariadne, while I buried myself in Gustave Glotz' *La civilisation égéenne*, an instructive if partially obsolete book about Minoan Crete. About five o'clock the island of Standia appeared on our port side. It marks the entrance to Herakleion—or Candia, as the Venetians called this city, the largest in Crete. When the wind died away at sundown the lights of the city were twinkling straight ahead; we went by engine into the coast in half an hour.

Even as we approached the long pier we could see inside its breakwater a white-painted floodlit ship which was so spotless and well cared for that it could only be from Sweden. Sure enough, when we passed under the high stern a little later we read ÖSTERLAND-GÖTEBORG in black letters on the white. Here was a chance of a much needed freshwater bath and of hearing news from home. We made fast to the empty pier a few yards in front of the *Österland* and walked to the steamer's gangway just as we were,

in our sailing togs and with our hair on end. A Greek customs officer stopped us and while we stood arguing with him a voice shouted in English from up on the ship:

"Who's there?"

"The captain and first mate of a neighboring ship," I answered, just as British and with the seven seas in my voice.

The man who had challenged us was the *Österland's* captain, Sune Andersson, whom we were rather surprised to find quite alone on board. The entire crew had gone ashore and to console himself the captain had brewed himself several stiff grogs in his magnificent private suite. Our reception was cordial—almost too much so, and we soon realized that we had come to the relief of a lonely soul in the nick of time.

Our encounter with this Scandinavian ship and its captain made a mixed impression on us, no doubt because we had come from such entirely different surroundings—the volcanic and peasant world of Santorin. Outwardly, its appearance was impressive—a picture of technical perfection and beauty of line which must have caused the impoverished Greeks to sigh with envy or resignation as the white ship, gay with flags, made a faultless entry into port: that is what the boats of the rich and fortunate nations look like, such is the ship of the future. The façade extended quite a long way in and included everything technical and social on board, from radar, refrigeration and the tastefully appointed rooms—the work of expert interior decorators—to the two-berth cabins with radio and private shower for the crew. But the human beings in this ideal environment! Is it quixotic to expect, I will not say a better human species, but at least more satisfied, more healthy individuals, less sunk in the miseries of existence than those who live under adverse external conditions? The pity is not so much that instead of captains of the old school, hardy old salts with authority and character, you find conscientious officials or young whippersnappers—for at sea, even as in war, it is often better to have a tyrant you can

rely on than a cipher who acts by the book. The really deplorable thing is to see the crews' reaction to improved living conditions. The modern seaman is more rootless than ever, because he is not only far from home, but has also lost the sturdy fellowship of the fo'c'sle; he grumbles more over being given day-old buns with his coffee than the sailor before the mast did over the weevils in the ship's biscuits, and his higher pay often means only a greater chance of running riot in port. While the officers have no choice in the matter of their crews and boats have to take whatever hands are next on the list at the signing-on port, the seamen pick and choose among the ships, and boats which, like *Österland*, are seldom in home waters have to make do with the dregs, men so broke that they cannot wait for the next boat, men with no roots or family ties in their own country, hooligans who finds things getting too hot for them. The situation is made even worse by the fact that the captain is powerless to get rid of even the worst incompetents during the voyage: the crew he has once taken on board he has to keep. Captain Andersson, with the same pride with which old-time captains used to brag of successfully repelled pirate attacks in the China Sea, told us of the bureaucratic stratagems in Genoa which had enabled him to get rid of a deck hand who had not properly sobered up since leaving Gothenburg. He had taken the fellow with him in a taxi to the Swedish consul and there surprised him into signing a document in which he admitted he was non compos and applied for a passage home at the consulate's expense.

One of the many illusions clinging to a sailor's life is that it means seeing foreign countries, instructive contact with people of other nations and a broad-minded international outlook. In reality, the ports of call are nearly all alike, and what contact the seaman makes with the population can only lead to mutual misunderstanding and wrong ideas. What notion of Sweden do the Greeks get from the tipsy seamen, rolling with money, who turn up their noses at the wine, spurn the food and ask the whole time for



whisky, cognac and girls? And what are the Swedish lads to think of Greece, which shows them its ugliest side and is represented by its seaport proletariat, by shady businessmen who make their living by cheating foreign seamen, and by a customs so near starvation that it has to take bribes? Instead of becoming international in their outlook the seamen turn into chauvinists who despise all "dagos" in the ports and think that their daily Swedish food is the yardstick of national civilization. On one point everyone on "the white sun boats," from the captain to the youngest deck boy, agree, if asked for their candid opinion: the Greeks are "a lot of bastards." It is no good saying that four fifths of the Greek population live in villages and small towns and are entirely different from the seaport Greeks. The crews go by their own experience and that is generally negative.

Captain Andersson was a hospitable man and himself laid out a generous supper in the pantry. Aquavit and pale ale from the refrigerator tasted wonderful in the hot August night. Afterward we went over to *Daphne*, which our host was curious about. When everything had been inspected and we sat down in the cockpit to taste our volcanic wine the worthy captain gave a heartfelt sigh:

"This is the life all right!"

If some city drudge at home in the bleak north had declared that he envied us we could have understood it, but this man, whose profession it was to sail in the very waters we were visiting for a few short months, should really have pitied us our uncomfortable life and its hardships. No, Captain Andersson insisted. A modern liner is like a railway train: timetable, the same everlasting stations, regular speed, routine. The weather plays almost no part in shipping nowadays, the captain lives indoors as in an office, eats too much and does not even get exercise walking to work. As we sat talking of all this we heard bawling and singing from farther inside the harbor, and along the pier straggled the vanguard of what might be called the crew's sorry retreat. Because of *Daphne's* smallness

only the masts and our three heads stuck up above the quay, and from what the fuddled lads could see of us they could never dream that the figures in the little hulk understood Swedish and that one of them was their own captain. Two "bodies" were dragged along at the head by slightly more sober shipmates. "That was the second cook and one of the engineers," the captain commented. A little later two boys came staggering along with their arms round each other's necks and engaged in a spirited conversation, of which we caught the following:

"This watch is a dud, you were a fool to give all ten drill heads for it . . ."

"Theft from the ship's stores," the captain said.

Then came four men on such wobbly pins that time and again we thought they would lurch out over the edge of the pier, but after many close shaves they got as far as us. Was it chance or instinct that made them, unlike the others, come right to the quayside just above *Daphne*, stop and begin swearing? Captain Anderson, in his white uniform coat, got up, crossed his arms and fixed his eyes on them like the lion tamer when he goes into the cage. There was a moment's silence on the quay, then the largest and coarsest of the men burst out:

"It's you, is it, you bloody old bastard, you silly old bugger . . ."

The others started pulling him away and he went under protest.

"He was so drunk that he didn't recognize me," Captain Anderson said, sitting down with a grim smile. "He's the worst trouble-maker and malcontent on board, in addition to being the representative in the seaman's union."

Far behind the others came a youth by himself, dragging his feet. He stopped on the quayside above us, his fair hair and weak, still childish features in the light of a lamp. Suddenly his face puckered and I leaped up on to the quay just in time to turn the threatened cascade in another direction. I took a firm grip of the boy's belt while his puerile stomach reacted against the overdose of drink.

Then he turned to me and said:

"I did have a f—— anyway."

"Well?"

He evidently took me for one of his shipmates, for he said appealingly:

"You can't say now I've never been with a girl, 'cos I've had a f——."

"Was she nice at least?" I asked.

"Nice? The room was almost dark and I was third in the queue."

I advised him to take an injection when he got on board, and the last we heard of him before he vanished into the darkness was:

"Afterward she wiped me down with a towel."

O thorny path of sailors' romance! What a long way from dreary reality to the gay hero of the sea chantey with a beautiful girl in every port! Like all romance, you must have distance, forgetfulness and an uncomprehending public.

"He'll be put to paint the masts tomorrow morning, it'll do his head good!" was Captain Andersson's comment.

Next day we steered cautiously between the many wartime wrecks in the harbor to the inner basin built by the Venetians, where we tied up outside the harbor commandant's little pavilion. From there the white-clad marines would have *Daphne* under their eye day and night and we could leave her with an easy mind when we went off on excursions. As in Civitavecchia, we were rather put off at first by the surroundings: the dirty water, the squalid, partially war-damaged houses, the prying people standing everlastingly on the quay. Candia is not strikingly beautiful and actually has nothing but its phenomenal museum to offer the tourist. The houses are low and huddled together, the streets for the most part are congested bazaars where the motley products of a fertile countryside are sold. There is no need to read the guidebook's historical section

to know that as late as 1923 Candia had a partially Mohammedan population. Admittedly the hated mosques were pulled down after the great exchange of population with Turkey, but the character of the city, with bazaar streets and the teeming life of the ugly, overcrowded quarters is Levantine and foreign to the rest of Greece with its sparsely settled areas. On the other hand, traces of the city's real heyday between 1204 and the heroic capitulation in 1669, when the Venetians were expelled by the Turks, are few and far between: a fountain, the city walls and the inner harbor. The bombardment during the last war can hardly have improved Candia's appearance; Crete by and large struck us as being much more war ravaged than the other parts of Greece we visited. The occupation, too, was more severe and lasted longer here. The very fact that a large part of the Cretan population understands German is a sign of this. It must have taken a lot to make an old Cretan woman or a shepherd boy learn German, but the one told us: "I did their washing for four years," and the other: "I was their donkey driver."

Yet although Candia seemed like a stinking oriental bazaar after the white cleanness of the Cyclades, we got so used to our surroundings during the two weeks we lay there that we came to like them quite well. Everything took on a homely, familiar air, from the flag-hoisting ceremony every morning, when a marine just outside our porthole called through a megaphone for a minute's silence all over the town ("*Ora simera, ora simera . . .*"), to the little restaurant up in the town, where, in the real Greek manner, we used to take the fish, meat and vegetables we ourselves had bought in the street. Our contentment was largely due to the Lambretta, which at night we were allowed to put away in the office of the harbor commandant himself and which in the daytime whisked us like a flying carpet through the Baghdad that the town had become in our tolerant eyes. All would have been well had not *Daphne's* unfortunate engine, which had never really been itself since Patras, given us endless worry. The gear, which had already played us so many tricks, began

to skid again when we were going to move into the inner harbor basin. The chief engineer of the *Österland* came to have a look at it and advised the soldering of more metal on the cogs of the gear. But the *Österland* sailed the same day and we were helped instead by the very nice refrigeration engineer of another Swedish boat, *Arctic Ocean*, which entered port two days later. "Chilblain" Lind was a teetotaler and would not even taste our Santorin wine, but he made no bones about devoting the whole of his afternoon off to our engine and managed to fix the gear trouble.

The *Arctic Ocean* was a supermodern refrigerator boat which was to load grapes in Candia. All the young girls of the town sat in large halls packing the magnificent bunches destined for London, and we inspected this fine display of Cretan loveliness, feminine and otherwise, together with the ship's gay and youthful commander, Captain Vogel. Day and night trucks drove the boxes of grapes out along the pier—except when the meltemia got up in earnest, drenching the half-mile-long quay in salt spray and interrupting the loading; whoever wanted to reach *Arctic Ocean* dry-shod had to take a taxi.

We had one stroke of luck—regarding Candia's museum. Egyptian or Ancient-American, Greek or Chinese art is spread all over the world and can be studied in London, Paris and New York; Cretan art, on the other hand, only in Crete. Apart from one or two minor exceptions, all the material collected since Sir Arthur Evans discovered Minoan culture at the turn of the century has remained on the island, and the foreign archeologists have been under the same rigorous restriction as the Greeks themselves to hand in all their finds to the big museum in Candia. Unfortunately, this was badly bombed during the war and we had heard in Athens that all the treasures were still hidden away and inaccessible. It was only by way of opening the conversation, therefore, that we asked the caretaker who lived at the back of the barred-up building when the museum would be open again.

"Tomorrow at ten o'clock," was the surprising answer.

Several private donations had made possible a limited restoration and an exhibition of the museum's chief treasures in four or five rooms, of which one of the museum custodians allowed us to have a private view the very same day. I cannot deny that the Candia Museum was one of the most interesting art experiences I have had. To come face to face, suddenly and in concentrated form, with an entire civilization of which books can only give a hazy idea, to have it presented as compact and complete as a retrospective exhibition of a deceased master's work, to discover the unity in this rich variety, to see that Minoan art has its own style, its impulses, its logical development, its brilliant masterpieces and its repetitions just as the life's work of an individual artist, even though in this case an entire people and two thousand years have been the creator—this was an experience the like of which I never had before. We went back to the museum almost every day; the first rapture was of course succeeded by certain reservations and revaluations, but this art is so rich and prolific that there were always new works to compensate for those which were less inspiring.

What is perhaps most fascinating at first is the frescoes: panels showing elaborately combed women with bare breasts, solemn processions and colorful garden scenes in a style that has an astonishing affinity with modern French painting from the beginning of the twentieth century. The Cnossos frescoes, the oldest of which was painted nearly four thousand years ago, was discovered at the same time as the French Nabis group and the Fauvist painters were flourishing, and one immediately begins to trace a very interesting line of influence from Crete to Bonnard, Matisse and Dufy—until one finds out that the influence is there all right, but really going the other way: the Cretan frescoes were restored by two Frenchmen, Gilliéron *père* and *fils*. As a basis to go on they had fragments of the size and completeness to be expected when a painted stucco wall collapses beneath a blazing palace and three thousand years of rain,

sun and treasure-hunters' spades have passed over it. How these fanciful products of "the intuitive art of restoration"—a yellow-blue fragment the size of a matchbox grows to be the calf of a man who in his turn becomes a prince, a figure which later turns out to be a monkey is "a boy picking crocuses" and some dimly outlined women's dresses are given voluptuously expressive heads and called "three blue ladies"—how all this and more in the same style can be taken seriously by archeologists and historians remains a mystery. It is partly bound up with the whole of the modern myth which Evans has succeeded in weaving around the conception of Minoan culture; this conception bears an unmistakable resemblance to the frescoes: here too fancy has been given a free reign and fragments of a whole or a context which is lost have been added to and presented as a separate panel.

Crete may be an important island geographically and its ancient relics fascinating and unique, but the elevation of this small spot to a cultural center in the same sense as the river valleys of the Nile or Euphrates and Tigris seems rather out of proportion. Where is the borderline between the historic entities known as civilizations and the more modest variants called national cultures? Cyprus has no civilization of its own, but has Anatolia or Syria, have the Hurrites or Mitanni? More recent excavations of palaces on the mainland, such as Mari and Tell-Atchana, show at any rate that Knossos is not so original as was formerly believed; the famous Cretan palace-style vases have turned out to have been imported from the continent, the frescoes have found parallels in the Egyptian Amarna art, in Syria and on the Greek mainland, and as for the bull cult, the double axes and the Great Goddess, they have undoubtedly been borrowed from the east. All this tempts one to ask heretically: has a simplified historical research exalted an insular form of Near-Eastern culture to the rank and dignity of the cradle of European civilization?

That is the question which a roving dilettante like the author

of these lines is unable to answer; he can only say that when trying to understand Cretan art it is as well to disregard all persistent associations with feasts, bulls and moral corruption at the court of a mythical King Minos. For the finest things in Candia's museum are not the frescoes, the bulls and all that is considered as illustrating the Minoan legend, but entirely different things, chiefly the fascinating terra-cotta statues of the Great Goddess—works which appeal directly to our most advanced artistic sense—and the miniature art of the seals. We spent hours over the latter, absorbed in minute reproductions of mythological scenes or plant and animal motifs which sometimes become abstract pictographs. As with the Babylonian scrolls, the hardness of the material has necessitated a monumental style which is not seen to advantage until it has been photographically enlarged to ten or twenty times its original size. We also stood admiringly in front of violin-like Helladic idols of a type which reappear so strikingly in Modigliani's painting, in front of snake goddesses in faïence with colorful flounced skirts, bare breasts and snakes coiled round their outstretched arms, in front of Rhyton goblets with harvest scenes unexcelled in realism by the 19th century and in front of richly painted terra-cotta sarcophagi and ceramics whose extraordinarily profuse development is the continuous thread linking the whole of Minoan culture.

A private collection in the town provided a valuable complement to our impressions from the museum. In Athens we had met a young Cretan who told us that his uncle in Candia had a large collection of Cretan art which we should see. The letter of introduction he gave us had a handwritten Greek address which we were quite unable to decipher, but when we showed it to the harbor commandant he exclaimed at once:

"Why, it's Doctor Giammalakis! You must go to the hospital, you'll find him there."

We did as he suggested and came to a large, dingy building in the center of the town. Outside in the street and on the stairs people



were waiting patiently in silence, but the doorkeeper seized our letter and made way for us through the crowd. We passed through a waiting room and suddenly found ourselves in the operating theater, where a tall man of about fifty in a white coat received us—Doctor Giammalakis himself, the owner of the hospital and the head surgeon. In this way we made the acquaintance of one of the nicest and most fascinating people I have met. Doctor Giammalakis is a wealthy man who has become a legendary figure in Crete; everywhere we heard evidence of his professional skill and his work as a doctor, largely carried out as charity. On this particular afternoon, as always, the hospital was full of people from all over the island who had come to consult him, but he evidently thought it was time for a short pause. Three cups of coffee were ordered from a near-by café and we sat down in the theater.

"The Germans destroyed and took away all my things," he told us. "There wasn't even a forceps left when I came out of prison."

We found out later that the doctor had been one of the leaders of the resistance movement. His art collection, however, he had buried out in the country in 1939 when war broke out and in this way saved it. He spoke modestly of his "hobby":

"What is one to do here in Candia of a winter's evening? I don't play cards and so I began to take an interest in antiquities. Now I'm quite crazy about them and consider I've done badly if I don't get hold of something new every day. Look what I've got today!"

He took a Roman seal of blue onyx out of his pocket and a fragile Minoan bowl decorated with octopuses out of a table drawer. Most of the things were brought to him by his patients, sometimes as fees, but more often he would pay cash for them. If a farmer found anything on his property and took it to the museum he usually got no compensation, but Doctor Giammalakis, who had the permission of the archeological commission to buy antiquities, gave just as good a price as the shady dealers who tried to get hold of what the astonishingly rich Cretan earth gave up so that they could ex-

port it illegally.

"I paid \$2.00 for this vase, but it has a small crack, and twice as much for the seal," the doctor told us.

Quite a lot has found its way into the doctor's flat in thirty years. We were invited to view the collection the following evening; we noticed that the seals especially were of better quality than the museum's. The doctor had his treasures in a room with tall cupboards from floor to ceiling, and bookshelves were lined with all available literature about Minoan culture. Giammalakis regards himself as an amateur, but in all probability he knows more about the subject than many of the archeologists who come to the island to excavate. Our study of the collection was partly hampered by the fact that the doctor himself was even more interesting than the pieces in his collection. His way of describing his discoveries in broken French, the personal glimpses he gave in connection with them, the restrained passion of his nature mixed with disillusionment, his air of authority, but above all the goodness shining from his eyes, all this combined to give an impression which Mona afterward summed up in the words:

"A doctor like that is more suited to a death bed than a sick bed."

The climax of the evening was the well-prepared and effective showing of the chief pieces in the collection. When we had examined the pick of the seals, held vases and sculptures in our hands and thought we had seen and admired everything, the doctor took out a bunch of keys and opened a large safe. As the heavy door swung open a light inside came on automatically, illuminating a bronze statuette, about a foot high, of a slim man carrying a calf on his shoulders. The massive enclosure of the safe and the almost ritual opening ceremony brought out in a wonderful way the hieratically religious quality of this sacrificial bearer to an unknown god. When the doctor had enjoyed our amazement to the full we were allowed to take out the figure and study it in detail. It has not yet been published, i.e., presented in any archeological publication, and

will certainly cause a sensation, as it is quite unique: there are no other similar examples of statuary art from the Minoan Age. Three other objects were kept on a lower shelf in the safe: a ceramic snake goddess of the well-known Cnossos type, a steatopygous woman's figure and a primitive miniature house of terra-cotta with birdlike human figures sitting round an opening in the roof.

The Royal Palace of Cnossos, about three miles outside Candia, is usually considered to be the sight most worth seeing in Crete. We drove out to it on the Lambretta through fertile farming land which lay fallow under the burning August sun. Critical comments are often made about Evans' restoration zeal, which transformed a few piles of stones on the ground to a cement palace three stories high in places, and it is true that these colonnades and re-erected walls sometimes make you wonder how much of the reconstruction is defensible and how much is pure flight of fancy. One upper story by all means, as there are unmistakable signs of stairs in the extant ground floor, but two? It is also true that the building—in its surroundings of stone pines and cypresses, with the paint peeling off cement that is anything but Minoan, with plate guttering and restored staircases—looks more like a modern sanatorium that has been bombed. The copies of the frescoes put up on the walls are also beginning to look shabby, having taken on an air of staircase adornments in certain badly kept blocks of flats from the Jugend period. It is nevertheless difficult to spurn the whole of this work and wish it had never been done. The unrestored royal palaces at Festos and Mallia have more beauty and atmosphere, to be sure, but we should not see them in the right light if Cnossos had not first given us a clear picture of all that laborious research has revealed about this architecture. The typical columns, narrowing toward the base, which were such an important element in Minoan architecture, have long since vanished, all being of wood. However, their

form and color are known from the frescoes and the pedestals are still there. The present cement columns are therefore fully defensible and are extremely effective. Cnossos, in its restored parts, must be regarded as a pedagogic model, while other parts—chiefly the terraced ceremonial place, the so-called theater, built round on three sides—have all the beauty of the genuine and untouched.

The second time we came to Cnossos was on a Saturday; it seemed hardly strange, therefore, that four large busses were parked outside the gates and that the ruins were milling with tourists. As a rule I detest guides, but sometimes—out of curiosity and in order to find out just how gullible people are—I join a group of tourists as they drink in the spate of comment. Once in the Bargello Museum in Florence I followed for a whole afternoon a woman who explained to a large, devoutly attentive flock that Ammanati's famous piece of sculpture of the swan very literally fecundating Leda represents "Falling in Love." Here at Cnossos one or two words in French, heard at a distance, raised my hopes of something similar:

. . . "and here is the Queen's toilet, for this is no new invention . . ."

I hurried up, but was quickly disappointed. The man speaking did have a slightly pompous air, but what he said was correct and interesting. No wonder: we found out later that it was none other than Professor Platon himself—the superintendent of the Candia Museum. At the time, however, we knew nothing of this or who the remarkably tidy and international-looking tourists were. It was a hot day and before long we had all collected at the café by the roadside. After two months' experience with Greek hospitality it seemed hardly surprising when a fat, gray-haired man leaped up as though stung by a wasp as I was about to pay for our coffee and said emphatically: "Certainly not, you are my guests!" But when the same man a moment later urged us up into one of the busses, explaining that we must sit beside him, we began to wonder and asked where we were going.

"To Archanes, they've got lunch waiting. If you want to see more of Cnossos we can stop on the way back."

Though slightly doubtful, we still put the whole thing down to excessive hospitality. Lunch at Archanes, why not? The passengers got in, the four busses started off and soon we were rolling up into the hills, all gaily discussing the day's *cause célèbre*, the romantic abduction of the lovely Cretan girl Tassoula by the son of the island's socialist bigwig. The thought that the two young people had already been alone together for four days somewhere in the very mountains we were passing through seemed to catch the imagination of the women in particular, but the men soon exhausted the subject. Suddenly our Greek host turned to me and asked inquisitorially:

"Do you use Antifax delousing powder?"

When, somewhat startled, I advanced the plea that we had fortunately been spared from lice so far, he said:

"During this season alone I have used over a hundred kilos of it. The results are perhaps not a hundred per cent, but that's because the neighbors don't use it."

Mona, who was sitting next to him, cautiously drew back as far as the seat would allow. At that moment the busses drove through a triumphal arch into a large, prosperous village and pulled up in a square, where about a hundred young girls struck up a song while a crowd of people stood around respectfully. The second we got out a grotesque man in tails appeared, looking as miserable and embarrassed as the dear old dogs children sometimes dress up in human clothes. Evidently he was the local mayor or something; stumbling and stuttering he read a long speech in Greek, whereupon the man with the delousing powder stepped forward and interpreted in French:

"The municipal authorities of Archanes ask me to convey to you, esteemed members of the eighth international wine-growers' congress, a sincere greeting of welcome and to thank you for the

honor you are showing this village, which in Crete is famous for its unsurpassed Rosaki grapes. Later on we shall be visiting some of the largest vineyards, but first of all we are invited to lunch by my esteemed colleague, the Chairman of the Cretan County Council. After lunch there will be an exhibition of Cretan national dances and I dare to assure you of a rare treat, as there has not been such a big dance festival in Crete as the one you will see since before the war."

Wine-growers' congress! That explained the hospitality, the delousing powder and the persistent conversation in the bus about makes of wine, vintages and prices. No doubt a stricter moral sense would have made me go up to our host and explain that we were not wine-growers but had come to Cnossos privately, but spirits were so high, the lunch tables already laid under the shady tree looked so inviting and there were so many in the party that no one could keep count of them all. We might as well go the whole hog, we thought, and now that we knew what it was all about the party was much more fun. Fortunately I lived in Burgundy for a few months as a young student and was therefore able during lunch to act the intelligent listener with surprising success when two Italians and a Turk involved me in a discussion about the feasibility of centralizing the villages' wine production—and yet retaining the quality—by means of cooperative groups, communal presses and large fermentation vats. Mona was having an easier time: Southerners do not expect a wine-grower's wife to have any professional knowledge, and through the babble I suddenly heard her unfeigned surprise as she answered something the Chairman of the Cretan Council had said to her:

"Are raisins made from grapes? How very interesting!"

Luckily the national dancing began immediately with the coffee. Young people clad in national costumes whirled round the space in front of the lunch tables to the strains of stringed instruments and expressive half-oriental singing. The men were dressed in black,

with high oiled leather boots and a kind of turban, the girls were in wide, colorful skirts. How much of this dancing and music was an old island tradition and how much was Turkish influence? Unversed in the traditions of folk dancing I seemed to recognize, at any rate, not only the Cretans of Minoan art, in the broad-shouldered but wasp-waisted youths and in the girls' enormous eyes, but also an archaic freshness in the panther-like elegance of the actual dancing which could not be Turkish. Most of the population of Archanes and the neighboring villages watched the dancing as well as the congress members. The day turned into a general festival, and many a couple as well as the grape experts got lost in the famous vineyards, where the vines grew like a continuous roof about two yards above the ground and in all directions a mysterious twilight reigned; an enchanted forest where huge, golden bunches hung down and shifting sun reflections danced over the ground. The many excellent wines that had been served with lunch had made the local mayor blissfully forget both tails and County Council Chairman. Together with his fat wife and 15-year-old daughter he showed two Italians, a Swiss and ourselves round in his private vineyard. The daughter was very sweet, with black corkscrew curls on her forehead, almond eyes and a long neck that made her an exact copy of the coquettish maids-of-honor at the court of King Minos—just as the Cretan grapes repeat the same gleaming bunches year after year. There were many who stole a glance at the girl when the proud mayor exclaimed:

"Have you seen such fruit before? It's just ripe and the harvest can begin any day at all."

It was a pity that we had to leave Archanes during the afternoon, just as the farmers were really getting wound up. A large banquet, however, was waiting in Candia on board the steamer which had brought the congress from Athens to Crete. Luckily all of them were still so hilarious on the way back that they were unlikely to have noticed our disappearance during the short halt at Cnossos.

Perhaps when they arrived and the Greek hosts mustered their flock at the dinner table someone wondered if the young French-speaking winegrower and his wife had gorged themselves on grapes and had to go to bed or if they had lost their way in the Minotaur's labyrinth.

We made two longish excursions from Candia with the Lambretta. The first took us across the island to the Messara Plain on Crete's south coast. Our real goal was the Minoan palaces at Festos and Hagia Triada, but only a few miles after the pass forming the way across Crete's "spine" we came across something unexpected in one of the valleys beneath Mount Ida.

The road, which is rather narrow and stony, twists along through a vast olive wood, so dense that it completely shuts off the view. We found ourselves enclosed in a kind of shadowy interior which was pleasant after the glaring sunlight and the extensive views. But what was this? Between the trunks we caught a glimpse of a huge, white figure and as we got nearer we met a Roman lady in a toga but without head or arms. Farther on in the silver haze of the olive trees was another statue, a god's torso, and in the stone wall separating two estates we saw fragments of columns and marble cornices. Not a house in sight, only the flat ground with withered grass and the gnarled trunks of the trees under the souging leaf roof. We went on through this mysterious wood, which was like a surrealistic dream: new statues kept emerging, lonely white ghosts from a past hidden in the earth, a race of cool marble colossuses which solemnly played hide-and-seek among the trees. Suddenly, right in the middle of the wood, a village. Its name is Gortyne, after the illustrious provincial capital from which Roman proconsuls governed both Crete and Cyrenaica in Africa, but it only occupies a small part of the old Gortyne's site. The village, even more than the surrounding wood, is filled with fragments from the ancient city.



Every self-respecting farmer has dragged home from his pastures at least two Roman emperors or proconsuls, which have been placed as doorkeepers outside the cow shed. The village church is built of ancient fragments and the sarcophagi are excellent drinking troughs by the springs. *Guide Bleu* speaks of both ancient temples and a Christian basilica from the sixth century in the surroundings, so we set out exploring in the magic silver wood. We at once got lost, however, as the level ground with the knotted old olive trees looks the same everywhere. At last we found the Pythian Apollo's temple in a little hollow which the Italian archeologists excavated more than fifty years ago; the level of the ancient city was evidently two or three yards below the present surface of the ground. A mutilated torso of the god stood effectively in the center of the ruins, an Apollo of which nothing remained other than the inviting movement of the arm. However surprising this ghost of a god may have been out there in the wood, he nevertheless blended with the surroundings, became an interpreter of them, to a far greater extent than any of the statues of great men which disfigure our cities and parks. Why is it so difficult for a modern sculptor to create a human figure which looks natural in its surroundings? We cannot even put a piece of sculpture in a street vista made by ourselves without its looking out of place or absurd. The secret of harmonizing man with nature, this knowledge which made the meeting between space and the prophets of cathedral towers so unforgettably great, seems to have been quite lost with the last of the Versailles sculptors.

From Gortyne we went on down the wide Messara Plain, which for the most part is covered with trees. It was very hot and we decided to drive straight down to the sea to have a swim before devoting ourselves to the Minoan palaces. A mile or so before the shore the road suddenly came to an end and a huge field extended right down to the water. We stopped in amazement, as one side of the field was enveloped in a cloud of dust out of which the bowing necks of ultramodern excavating machines stuck up, and an un-

broken line of large trucks drove at breakneck speed in a circle inland, where they discharged their loads of sand and gravel without stopping. A farmer who came riding along on a donkey laden with melons solved the mystery for us: the ubiquitous Americans were building a large modern airfield on strategically important Crete and had put their trucks and excavating machines ashore straight from the sea with landing boats. Even the Germans had an airfield on this site, but the heavy new bombers require longer runways and the Korean war was hurrying the work up. The same farmer warned us about going down to the beach, which was bristling with mines except for a narrow path which took us down to our longed-for swim—though it gave us a nasty feeling to look for miles along the deserted beach, adorned with eloquent signs of warning with grinning skulls.

The next stage was a veritable ordeal, but also a triumph for the Lambretta, as, not finding any road, we were forced to drive for several miles along the bed of a dried-up river. Then we followed a little tropically green valley with a stream flowing through it and at last reached the palace ruins, surrounded by stone pines, of Hagia Triada. We had not seen a soul for the past hour and it took us some time to make sure that the ruins we had found were the right ones. Everything looks so clear and simple in the plan of a guide-book, but in reality it is often a pure puzzle picture: Is this a newly erected sheepfold, built by the local shepherds, or is it a throne room? Is this terrace an old threshing place or a palace courtyard? Slowly, however, everything falls into place—in this case thanks to our training at Cnossos, which had shown us the type and general disposition of the Minoan palaces. Hagia Triada has a gentle, rustic charm, yet at the same time it makes you think of a modern Californian millionaire's villa with its terraces on different levels and its free planning with the various parts of the building fitting into the surroundings. It was evidently built as a residence for a vassal or relation of the rulers in Festos, whose imposing palace is about

three miles to the north.

Dragging the Lambretta rather than carried by it, we continued along the dried-up river bed, having in vain asked some shy, almost wild shepherd boys the way. One is apt to forget that people's gestures are conventions just as much as language and think that all nationalities point, nod and shake their heads in the same way. The Greeks disabuse one completely. We soon learned that a kind of upward nod here means no, but despite study we never found out the rules for indicating direction. These shepherd boys pointed, but nodded in dissent when we pointed in the same direction as they, obviously because it means something else if, while pointing, you have your body turned to the left or right. We had to find our way to Festos as best we could on our own and eventually got there with the help of a pocket compass.

We left the Lambretta by an old mill, under whose wheel a little crystal-clear summer brook hurried soundlessly along. From here a steep, narrow path led up to the crest of the hill where Festos, one of ancient Crete's oldest and wealthiest cities, lay. At first the only thing visible is a desolate, pine-clad ridge, where the romantic ruins of a deserted convent await annihilation. Not until you reach the point of the ridge, where the view opens out on three sides, do you find the mighty walls, terraces, palace courtyards and storerooms which make Festos the most impressive and darkly mysterious of the Minoan royal palaces in Crete. These ruins, in their Arcadian surroundings with a view of fertile plains and blue mountains, make you think both of the independent households of patriarchal farms and the barbaric luxury of the oriental hierarchs' palaces. It is the Italians who have excavated Festos, and in the little archeologists' villa—so surprisingly Tuscan with majolica medallions on the façade and green windowshutters—we met three Italian archeologists, who for the first summer after the war's tragic reverses had been able to return to their work in Crete. Next door there was a little tourist pavilion where we got a room for the night. It was

built some time in the twenties in such a "historic" style that even the bedside table with the vessel belonging to it was Minoan, but despite the war the house was in surprisingly good condition—it had been used as a recreation home for wounded German airmen from the near-by airdrome. Being the little hotel's only guests we had dinner in the kitchen with the caretaker and his family, a simple meal served by the flickering light of a tallow candle, but memorable because of the atmosphere of natural dignity and unforced fellowship. The father made the sign of the cross over the black bread and as he broke it and portioned it out we felt as though we had taken part in a sacred rite. A young woman who must have been wonderfully beautiful six or seven years before but who now resembled an accusing Cassandra with enormous black eyes in her expressive face, also shared the meal. She lived in a village down in the valley, but had come up to earn a little money working at the excavations. What she told us of her life as commandeered *Dienstmädchen* for four years in the German airmen's casino by the airdrome was no worse or no more tragic than countless other human destinies in occupied lands, but the fact that she did so in a common German full of slang expressions and perhaps even more the fact that her name was Eurydice, wrung our hearts just as much as if we had watched a bird fall into tar and try in vain to rid its feathers of the sticky substance: it is impossible, it can never fly again.

The Italian head archeologist, Professor Doro Levi, had asked us in for a vermouth later in the evening, and after strolling around the moonlit ruins we went to the archeologists' villa. We were cordially received, we enjoyed speaking Italian again and were soon infected by the carefree joy of life that characterizes the sons of Greece's happier neighbor to the west. But just because the present was so glittering and vital, with animated voices, the chirping of the crickets around the terrace and the starlit night gleaming over the ruins, the ancient past was also strangely close and alive. There is always a special atmosphere about archeological excavation sites,

where things that have lain hidden and protected for thousands of years again meet man's eye and the present. Through this meeting not only are excavated objects reconquered by the present, but there is a reverse effect as well: the present is affected by the objects and sinks down into the depths of time together with its stars, crickets and voices, the present suddenly takes place three thousand years ago. Evenings in the archeologists' houses, warm summer evenings in Delphi, Delos and Festos—nothing has taught me as you have done that the present is a place in the landscape of eternity, a place which is sometimes cramped and fenced in so that one only sees the immediate surroundings, but which sometimes lies up on the heights from which one has a view over both the past and the future.

Our second excursion in Crete took us from Candia to the eastern part of the island. The road itself was a very mixed blessing and the Lambretta was again put to a severe test. Candia and its ordered urban conditions was only a few miles behind us when we found ourselves riding along mountain tracks so neck-breaking that we quite understood that no traveler dares pass the little church where a miracle-working Madonna specializing in road accidents accepts offers of money and wax candles. The passengers of a crowded bus were just putting their mites in the almsbox when we arrived, and having seen them continue up the zigzag mountain track we also took out an insurance policy in this most reliable of companies. A few miles farther on one's prayers are answered beyond all expectation: the boulders and sand are suddenly replaced by the most perfect asphalt road—which, however, leaves the miserable sinner in the lurch just as abruptly, confirming the rule which says that Greek roads are capable of anything, even ceasing altogether for longer or shorter stretches.

If the road tried our patience, the scenery more than made up for it. The blue sea was with us the whole time, now far off so that we merely sensed it between the innumerable daisy-like windmills

which pump up water from below the fertile fields, now so near that we looked down from the top of the cliff into small bays where the reflections of the waves floated over the pebbly bottom and some rustic Nausicaa was spreading out her washing on the beach. The grape harvest was in full swing, and everywhere along the hillsides the peasants were busy picking the large yellow bunches, which were put to dry in the sun in mile-long strings on the ground. It is easier for the Cretans to find a market for raisins than for wine, which commands a very low price, and in these parts, where not a drop of rain falls from early in the spring until the middle of September, drying is a simple process. We stopped and took snapshots of the harvesters in various places and each time were presented with so many bunches that for the rest of the trip Mona sat and fed me with large, sweet grapes as I drove. During our journey we had grown used to the Greeks' unbelievable love of strangers, but we were nevertheless surprised and touched when we stopped in a poor little village street to ask some old people the way. They were sitting cooling themselves in the shade of their houses, but instantly ran in after gifts. An old woman came with hazel nuts, another with water and an old man insisted on our accepting a beautifully carved shepherd's crook. When we made to leave after five minutes' conversation in our rudimentary Greek we were as warmly embraced by these doddering old people of seventy and eighty as if we had been their close relations.

Our first goal for the day was the royal palace at Mallia. If Cnossos gives a reconstruction of the Minoan palace and Festos its unspoiled appearance as a ruin, Mallia's chief virtue is that it represents an older, more rustic edition of the palace type. While Festos and especially Cnossos have been modernized with sky-lighted courtyards and annexes during the five-hundred-year period up to 1400 B.C., Mallia's ground plan has been preserved just as it was laid out soon after the year 2000. Mallia is on a plain, a mile or so from the nearest village, with the sea as a blue ribbon on

the horizon and majestic blue mountains in the other directions. It was the French who excavated this imposing edifice in the 1920s. The work has evidently been completed for the time being and in the primitive caretaker's cottage we found only a white-haired old shepherd, who regaled us with melon, goat cheese and water.

From Mallia we hummed on across the large, desolate plain, climbed up among the mountains to the east and passed the big, prosperous village of Neapolis. The roasting sun was at the zenith and the heat was appalling as we looked down from the pass toward the clear Gulf of Mirabello, with the little town of Hagios Nikolaos at our feet. The first thing we did after a neck-breaking descent was to drive to a solitary little bay outside the town and dive head-first into the glassy sea. After our swim we ate with relish the snack we had brought with us, sitting in the shade of a gnarled olive tree. But where could we have our afternoon nap during the "dog hours"? The air was like a furnace even in the shade and there was no cool breeze off the sea. On the other side of the bay was a snow-white church among the pines on the point, isolated like so many churches in Greece. Was some saint outraged, did an all-seeing God frown as two strangers swam across to this little temple, found it cool and welcoming and stretched out on the hard stone floor in front of the iconostasis' image of the archangel for a delightful snooze?

Hagios Nikolaos turned out to be a small but busy port where we should like to have brought *Daphne*. In the well-protected harbor basin we saw a whole flotilla of caïques, and I was very pleased to see an old *Sokrates* among all the evangelists and saints. A Danish doctor we met at the café, who was working in the town with tuberculosis vaccination, told us he thought of settling down in Hagios Nikolaos for the rest of his life. We understood him, but put temptation behind us and pushed on eastward after an hour or so along the shore of the Gulf of Mirabello. From what we had been told in Candia there was a hotel in the village of Pachyammos, about twenty miles farther on. When, after jolting for two hours over the

vile road through desolate but extremely beautiful country, we came at sunset to the top of a hill and caught sight of a few miserable hovels by a sandy beach, we could not believe at first that this was Pachyammos. "The hotel" turned out to be a room above the village storekeeper's donkey stable and the only supper which his pregnant and sick wife could produce consisted of two eggs and a piece of dried, inedible fish; there was neither fruit nor wine to be had. We went for an evening walk along the beach, where emaciated children and black swine almost as lean grubbed about in the warm sand. At a primitive café where a kerosene lamp was lighted we met some men who told us of what the village had gone through during the war. One of them described dispassionately and factually how the Germans had shot his ten-year-old son before his eyes. The night at the hotel, however, where the sheets had perhaps last been changed to celebrate V-Day, was better than we dared hope, and once having got to sleep despite the stink we did not wake up until one of the donkeys in the stable under the floor greeted the rising sun with a *de profundis* loud enough to wake the dead.

The guidebook said that the ruins of Gournia were not far from Pachyammos, the only Minoan city to have been excavated with all its houses, streets, temples and palace. An American, Miss Boyd Haves, has carried out the tedious work of uncovering, stone wall by stone wall, this town which was already flourishing in the 17th century B.C. at the same time as the then Sun King, Minos, built his Versailles at Cnossos. But from a distance the hills around Pachyammos all look alike, with low shrubs and walls, and it was not until we climbed the third rise in a little valley facing the sea that we found it was the right one. Here, if ever, you have to find your bearings with the help of the map before you can be sure that the small stone quadrangles are foundations of houses.

The most striking thing about Gournia is its incredibly small scale. It is a toy city, where the potter's and the smith's houses are Lilliputian, the streets as narrow as ditches, the temple is like a



doll's house, the city gate a pantry door and the market place a small ballroom. How could people live in this miniature world? The size of the bedrooms indicates a more short-statured race than ours, and the cramped labyrinth of the streets is probably due to the fact that man's companion the horse had not been discovered when Gournia was built. But this does not explain the discrepancy shown by Gournia from our idea of size. A walk among these houses reveals instead that the scale we regard as innate and which for centuries has determined the environment we have made for ourselves is in no way physically conditioned by the human body. Present-day bunker defenders, seamen in their tiny cubbyholes and factory hands in their vast workshops know from personal experience that it is not a bodily but a mental need which makes us feel at home only in our "normal" houses with their special size of rooms, doors, windows, furniture and stairs. The contrast between our castles and cottages, between churches and shops, cannot hide the fact that in all our buildings we apply one and the same measure, the scale inherited from the Greeks. Only because we have had this fixed norm has it been possible, by means of suitable adjustments, to bring about the variations which social and religious considerations have entailed, to make the cottage unpretentious, the baronial hall magnificent, the church majestic and to stay moderate in them all. The Minoan architecture is based on quite another system of proportion, as shown by the low, narrow throne room at Cnossos, the queen's famous temple-like toilet and the palace courtyards like market places. Just as the Egyptian pyramids are mathematically determined in their proportions, but can be big or little, i.e. lack scale, in the same way Minoan architecture and art varies between the miniature and the colossal. Not until the Greeks changed the old measure, the immeasurability of the gods, for man, did architecture in the western sense become possible.

Gournia, a toy town for a race of pigmy handicraftsmen, for a

tyrant with a two-handed sword like a paperknife, for farmers who harvest grapes in the belief that they are melons—no place in Greece shows more clearly the difference between Minoan culture and Greek. One stops in front of this well-organized community seething with work, struck with the same amazed admiration as when faced with the social mystery of an ant heap or bee colony. What did these busy honey-gatherers think and feel? All roads to their inner selves are closed to us and our efforts to transfer our own mentality to them is no more realistic than the witty animal dialogues of the fable writers. The first time in history that we are really able to enter into the spirit of the past is at Mycenae's fortress, echoing with tragic lament, and only with the 5th century Greeks do we reach a deeper understanding. But then the contact is also complete: just as Plato's intellectual problems are still our own, the Greek buildings can easily be fitted into our modern cities.

Evans and his successors considered that even King Minos' subjects were almost westerners. They based this notion largely on the discovery that the Cretans could portray octopuses, flowers and human figures in an impressionistic style which is strongly reminiscent of modern art. The sign of equality was simply put between realism and humanism: the ability to conceive objectively and reproduce one's environment must, it was reasoned, mean an intellectual freedom like that of the Italians of the Renaissance and the classic Greeks. It was thought, therefore, that European individualism, joy of life and freedom flourished for the first time half unnoticed on the sunny island in the Mediterranean, before being temporarily obscured by the intrusion of barbarism just as again later during the Middle Ages.

Snijder, the art historian, is one of those who have emphatically pointed out that such an interpretation of Crete's art is basically false. In his excellent book on Cretan painting he stresses that the realism in question is founded on a primitive eidetic experience of reality, is a projection of the optically present memory images and

ideas found in children and savages. The Cretan artists' bird- and dolphin-frescoes, therefore, are not decorations for the summer dining rooms of proto-Renaissance princes but the expression of a barbaric nature-magic, and their ability to mimic nature has nothing to do with the attitude of the Impressionists or other modern painters but is rather related to the brilliant animal pictures in the caves of the Stone Age. Not until the interest in the intrinsic value of animals and things has cooled and everything has been set in relation to man can one speak of a western outlook on life—which at the outset is so exclusive that the older Greek art has almost no other motive but the direct reproduction of the human form. It is true that the animals, plants and landscapes return during Hellenism, but in quite another sense: as decoration, background and safety valve for humanism's superiority.

Yet even if you do not find in Crete the proto-Hellenism, the germ of the Greek spirit which you expected, a visit to the island is nevertheless the best finish to a journey in Greece, for it shows the clear borderline separating our civilization—with its Greek, Hellenistic, Roman and Christian phases, evolved one out of the other—from all the preceding and surrounding world. Nothing is more dangerous than the idea that man, by a kind of natural and gradual development, tends toward his present freedom. The realization that this freedom is a value acquired unexpectedly by a particular people during a limited time teaches us that it can be lost just as suddenly. The old Cretans show clearly that one can live a well-ordered social life, develop an impressive technique and create a fascinating art without possessing it.

After staying for ten days on the island of ancient relics, grapes and blue mountain chains the matter of our return voyage became urgent. We had sailed 1,600 nautical miles from Rapallo and were now at the farthest point from our base. Even if the return trip

past the dreaded southern tip of the Peloponnese, Cape Matapan, shortened the distance by 400 nautical miles, 1,200 miles was no mean stretch when we thought of the short time that was left of our holiday. It was now September 3rd, Mona was to start work again in Stockholm on October 1st and I had undertaken some scientific work from the same date. If we sailed northward day and night with the shortest possible stops in two or three ports we might manage it, but two factors cast a dark shadow over our plans: the meltemia and our engine.

During the whole of our stay in Candia the wind had been as regular as clockwork. Dead calm every evening from sunset and all night long, lovely, still mornings, but from half-past nine a meltemia which was often so violent that the waves broke right over the pier and the loading of grapes onto the Swedish refrigeration boats had to be suspended. The only chance for a boat of *Daphne's* size, therefore, was to start in the evening so as to reach Crete's administrative capital, Kanea, in the morning and then go on the next night to Kythere, where the meltemia's dominion is at an end, but where, instead, other notorious storm winds have been the terror of mariners since antiquity. With a little luck, we would no doubt have managed it if our engine had been reliable. But despite every care lavished on it by kindhearted engineers on Swedish ships, it gave me a feeling of insecurity which was not lightened by the quite agreeable way it started when I tried it out in port.

We worked hard all day on September 3rd to get everything ready for departure. Mona went marketing while I summoned all my patience to get some vital drinking water out of the curious tap which the customs men had shown me. Of the many different sources of water we had met during our travels this was unique. For no reason at all it stuck out through a window on the first floor and could be reached only by means of a rickety ladder propped against the wall. Water is precious in Candia and evidently it was not meant to be too easily accessible. At sunset we heard, as we

thought for the last time, the whistle denoting the flag-striking ceremony at the harbor commandant's office and an hour later we got our clean bill of health plus ship's certificate and could winch up our muddy anchor, stinking of sewers, from the harbor bottom. Outside the pier we met a high sea but no wind. With some foreboding, however, we saw in the clear moonlight that the 8,000-foot-high peak of Mount Ida was enveloped in dense wreaths of cloud, which had not happened during the ten days we had lain in port. What could it mean? After an hour or so huge flashes of lightning lit up the wild, rocky coast on our port side. The engine had been working quietly and steadily the whole time and we were already about ten nautical miles from Candia. Suddenly we heard a squeaking and wheezing from the engine room. I slowed down at once and crept through the hatch to face the calamity. The trouble was not hard to find: the reduction gear was running hot, it was crackling like a coffee mill and I realized at once that a ball bearing was broken. There was nothing for it but to stop the engine and turn back with heavy heart to Candia.

Fortunately the thunderstorm brought a little wind from the sea, otherwise we should have drifted and rolled about until next morning. It was hardly more than midnight when we again let go our anchor in the harbor. That night our spirits dropped well below zero. We saw that our chances of getting home in time were almost nonexistent, that engine repairs might be more expensive than we could afford and that it was even doubtful if anyone in the town could help us. To make matters worse the storm burst during the night, the wind howled in the rigging and—*mirabile dictu*—it began to rain, our first rain for three months. Autumn had evidently arrived and put an end to the summer's settled weather. What would our crossing to Italy be like? For that matter, would we ever get away from this wretched Candia?

## VOYAGE HOME

WE WERE SOMEWHAT consoled next morning when we looked out of the cabin and found that the waves were breaking right over the pier. In such weather it was certainly better to be lying snugly in port, and we could even be thankful that the engine had forced us to turn back in time. The thing now was to get hold of someone who knew about engines. I went off to the Swedish consul, a Greek businessman, who, after several telephone calls, promised that "the most skillful mechanic in Candia" would come down to the boat instantly. Sure enough, after half an hour the big man appeared, accompanied by two underlings, but even physically he was so big and fat that he would not fit into *Daphne's* engine room. The only way was to lift out the engine, but this called for cranes, blocks and levers. I toiled like a galley slave all day together with the underlings and late that afternoon, oily to the eyebrows, we unscrewed the reduction gear in the equally besmeared forecabin, to which the engine had been moved. Sure enough, the ball bearing was crushed to atoms, but where could we get a new one? Next morning I combed Candia in the great man's company. We went to every conceivable place, from workshops and garages to country smithies and obscure junkyards on the outskirts of the city, where everything that can be unscrewed from shot-up tanks and army trucks was sold by individuals with oriental business methods. It seemed quite hopeless, as the ball bearing was of an unusual diameter, but about ten o'clock in the evening we found, in a tobacconists's, a first-rate SKF bearing, evidently bartered by some Swedish seaman.

By the following afternoon the engine was back in place and the

critical moment for testing it had arrived. Everything seemed to exceed our hopes, the *Olympia* purred like a cat and Mona got out a bottle of volcanic wine, in which we drank the health of Candia's great mechanic. Luckily I went down into the engine room to check that everything was all right before the delicate matter of payment was brought up. The gear box was red hot and only by stopping the engine instantly did I avoid the new bearing's being damaged. The mechanic's disappointment seemed as genuine as ours, though for a different reason.

"I was going to ask half a million for the job," he sighed, "but now it will have to be a hundred thousand (about \$7.00)."

We sank into the depths of gloom and the future looked black indeed. Next morning a new ray of hope shone: a Swedish steamer, the *Helios*, nosed her way into port. After only an hour we had the obliging second engineer, a German from Kiel called Kapahnke, on board. He gave up the whole of his day off to help me lift out the engine once more and look at the gear. Meanwhile, however, mutiny was brewing behind my back. Mona, who was evidently more tired than I was of all our troubles and less stubborn about seeing our enterprise through, had realized the bitter truth: that a wearisome nonstop sail to Rapallo in the short time we had left was impossible even if the engine was mended. In the afternoon she came back to *Daphne* together with three Swedish sea captains, Messrs. Blomgren and Svensson from the Orient Line and Lundgren, the captain of the *Helios*. They had an excellent suggestion: *Daphne* could be taken home to Stockholm on the deck of the *Skogaland*, which was due in Candia in two days' time, and a telegram had already been sent to Gothenburg for permission and an estimate of the cost. Mona made out afterward that I had never looked so Finnish as when, without a word in answer to all this chat, I popped down again into the engine room with a fanatical glint in my eye. My own recollection, actually, is that I suddenly felt like a little boy gamely fighting back the tears that welled up. A

more ignominious end to our proud Odyssey could hardly be imagined!

The engine was tried out, the reduction gear was all right, but Kapahnke, who gave it an expert overhaul, said that the mechanic in Patras had obviously made the compression too high and that it was risky to run it for long stretches. This gave the deathblow to all idea of starting on our own and I fell in reluctantly with Mona's arrangement.

That evening a small Italian ship entered port. The sight of the gay flag cut us to the quick as a further reminder of our misfortune. What more natural than that we should stand longingly on the quay in front of the pretty little ship and listen to the Italian voices and shouts as though to the sirens' song? What more natural than that we should start talking to the sunburned skipper, a powerfully built man who looked to be a real sea dog. We were at once asked on board and shown over the pleasant, newly built ship in detail. The *Papa' Buonaiuto* from Genoa was a tanker of 280 tons' displacement, built to carry wine and with a crew of seven including the captain. It had come to Candia to load for a Swiss firm's account; the wine was to be delivered at Cette on the French Riviera. After looking the ship over we sat down with the captain and first mate to a vermouth in the little dining saloon while the crew hung curiously outside the open door and joined eagerly in the conversation. It was not hard to hear where they all came from. One had a Neapolitan accent and two a Sicilian; the skipper and the others all spoke the ugly Ligurian dialect, which to us, as matters then stood, had a sweet sound of home. Our account of *Daphne's* winter sojourns at Lavagna aroused a veritable storm of delight among the Italians. Heavens above, the skipper came from Riva Trigoso almost next door and knew the Sangermani brothers at the shipyard very well! The first mate's home was even nearer and our glowing praise of Sestri Levante, the clear mornings by its palm-fringed beach, of the church bell's joyous ringing and the *espresso* cafés



in the market place—descriptions which we charged with all our longing for our lost paradise—almost brought tears to the eyes of these seamen who are so seldom at home. We had suddenly become close friends and countrymen of these men who were homesick for the same place as we, and it was all in keeping that we poured out our hearts and related our troubles.

"We'll tow you to Elba," Captain Ghio said suddenly.

I took it as a joke, but the captain was in earnest. The thought was quite new to me, but common sense told me all the same that the thing was impossible. Apart from the bother and loss of time for the motorship the weather was a big obstacle. The meltemia had been succeeded by a series of autumn storms with a leaden sky and an ill-tempered sea. I knew that towing in heavy weather was a very risky undertaking and no doubt impossible with a boat as small as *Daphne*. Captain Ghio could not deny this but declared sanguinely and with conviction:

"You see if the weather isn't good when the *Papa' Buonaiuto* sticks her nose out of port."

We were quite ready to trust in our good luck, but to count on dead calm during a voyage nearly as long as from Gothenburg to Spain across unsheltered waters seemed stretching it a bit far. Still, we were already helped if we managed the first stage across to Italy. From the Straits of Messina we ought to be able to get up to Rapallo before the end of September. When we swayed ashore late in the evening, followed by the sound of mandolins and Neapolitan folk songs, we could not help seeing a sign from above in the worthy little hull's name, *Papa' Buonaiuto*—translated literally, "Daddy Good Help." We were not quite so hopeful next day when the storm boomed against the pier, but Captain Ghio had told us that it would be at least four days before the *Papa' Buonaiuto* had finished loading. Providence, therefore, had plenty of time. Another day went by, we saw a lot of the Italians, who treated us to delicious lunches and dinners, where the wine was certainly

not stinted—day and night it was pumped on board from casks which were hauled to the quay in ox carts. But the blustering weather continued and the *Skogaland* arrived, stately and gleaming white. We were told that the shipping company had accepted the freight for two thousand kronor (\$400). The decision could be put off no longer: either a quick and comfortable ten days' voyage direct to Stockholm or a hazardous adventure on a sea whose treachery and bitter salt taste we already knew to our cost. Need I say that we chose the unsafe instead of the safe, the slight chance instead of the dull certainty? The *Skogaland's* commander, Captain Seeman, was glad to be relieved of such a troublesome deck cargo but considered it his duty to warn us:

"In your shoes I would never embark on such a towing. A small boat can be dragged under and sink in a couple of minutes before the crew can do a thing. You need long practice and must be on the alert at the tiller the whole time, and if you lose sight of the tow boat's light at night you're lost."

I passed this argument on word for word to Captain Ghio on the *Papa' Buonaiuto*, but he only laughed. The words of warning had, however, made a sufficiently deep impression for me to want to make sure of being able, if necessary, to cut the tow rope.

"I'm going to buy a good sharp ax before we leave at any rate," I told the captain.

"By all means," he said. "But there's no need to waste your money on a new one. You can borrow our ax for the voyage."

It was a great relief when the *Skogaland* sailed: now it was too late to change our minds. At Captain Ghio's suggestion we had moved *Daphne* alongside the *Papa' Buonaiuto* and already joined forces with its crew. Mona mended their clothes, I wrote a long love letter in English for Nunzio Caradonna from Sicily, who had been a prisoner of war on a farm in England and had a sweetheart there. Secondo Barsotti from Viareggio wanted a letter of introduction in Swedish so that he could apply for a job on a Swedish ship

in Genoa, and Santo Greco from Acitrezza in Sicily was illiterate and could not write home to his own mother. As was right, however, we saw most of the captain, Nelitto Ghio, a thoroughly good soul, whose chief interest and constant effort was to show himself to be really tough. Those around him were kept busy lending him a hand in this and we too did our best to listen to all his stories from the war, which invariably culminated in words of praise addressed to him by some admiral or other bigwig. We also exclaimed convincingly: "Quite right!" when he told us of how he had dealt out socks on the jaw to people in various ports who did not treat him with the proper respect. Especially noteworthy was his stock of a hundred neckties—of which, however, we never saw him wearing a single one—and his ten suits, made in Spain, on hangers in the wardrobe. His real self, however, peeped out when he showed us photographs of his 7-year-old daughter, his wife, (who was of *very* good family,) and his brothers who were shopkeepers at Sestri.

It was a Tuesday when we threw in our lot with the *Papa' Buonaiuto*. Two days later, a Thursday, we were to sail. On Wednesday a new thunderstorm burst and Thursday morning was windier than ever. Captain Ghio made light of our worried questions. The cargo was not full yet, the ox teams with the wine still came creeping like snails along the quay, the sun shone, the pump whirled and we sat in deck chairs. Tomorrow, *domani*, was set for our departure. Friday's weather was decidedly more hopeful, but even then we did not get away. There were formalities to be settled, an inspector came on board and sealed the lids of the cisterns, the exporter came to say good-by, bringing with him three 50 liter casks of best quality wine for daily consumption during the voyage. But *domani* we would definitely go.

We did too. The *Papa' Buonaiuto's* and *Daphne's* cook made a quick round of the market to stock up for six days' isolation on their respective ships, Captain Ghio fetched his certificate and the first mate hoisted the French flag on the mast: the next port was

Cette, east of Marseilles. Earlier in the morning the crew had fastened round *Daphne's* two masts and deckhouse a hawser strong enough to have towed us by land right across Europe if it had been necessary. When we cast off from the quay about ten o'clock I reminded the captain about the ax.

"Chuck the ax over to *Daphne*," he ordered Grosso the engineer.

"We haven't one, commandante," was the answer.

There was no time for comments, but I thought quite a lot about Italian fecklessness as I got out my Finnish *puukko*. Such a little knife was not of much use for cutting a brand-new rope as thick as my arm, but it did give a certain moral support. Anyway, we had other things to think about: as soon as we cleared the harbour the tow rope was paid out, the *Papa' Buonaiuto* put on speed and we headed out toward the open sea, where the wind was driving white-crested waves against us. I sat rather anxiously at the tiller, luckily with oilskins on, as the minute the motorship increased speed the deck was covered with spray. Soon we were rushing along at eight knots in a cloud of foam and green water. Was this, or something worse, to be our lot for six days? Fortunately *Daphne* seemed to have no difficulty in following on the right course and I noticed with a sigh of relief that Captain Seeman's prediction had been considerably exaggerated. *Daphne* headed obediently in the *Papa' Buonaiuto's* wake without really needing a hand at the tiller, and as time went on I left her more and more to herself. At last we both moved aft, where, perched on the spanker boom support like two sparrows, we took it easy in the only dry place above deck. *Daphne* also rolled rather heavily in the waves, having no sails to steady her; the *Papa' Buonaiuto*, on the other hand, forged calmly and steadfastly ahead over the sparkling sea.

But what was this? When, after a good hour, we had left the Bay of Candia behind us, the sea grew calmer and after another hour we were gliding over a surface like a millpond without so much as a drop splashing on to the deck. Was Captain Ghio after

all the darling of Neptune he made himself out to be? Hope returned, and while *Daphne* held course for Cythera, Mona got a gala dinner ready in the pantry. The sun dropped into the shoreless sea, the warm southern night closed round us and the *Papa' Buonaiuto*, which chugged confidently along a hundred yards ahead, lit the stern light. We were happy-go-lucky enough to turn in quite calmly after we too had hung out a lantern—fully dressed, however, and with the cabin door open so that we could instantly take action if necessary. All night we glided along so gently that, from inside the cabin, we might have been lying snugly at anchor in port if the hissing and lapping of the water against the sides of the boat had not lulled us with its sweet music. The nautical miles slipped imperceptibly by, the log whirled and when, just after midnight, I did the rounds to check that all was well, I could make out a high cliff silhouette to starboard: Cythera. Thwarting as it was to steal like this in the dark past the famous island of love—which out of curiosity at least would have been worth a visit—I tried to console myself with the rather offhand lines with which *Guide Bleu* dismisses the place: "The island of Cythera's appearance hardly comes up to one's poetic expectations of Aphrodite's island." Then we went fast asleep again until the sun was high in the heavens. Across the glassy water rose a high blue promontory: the dreaded Cape Matapan, on this particular morning bathed in halcyon calm and dewy clarity; Europe's southernmost point after Tarifa in Spain. With that we left the worst of our enemies, the meltemia, behind us. The Ionian Sea too greeted us with the gentlest of breezes, a faint ripple on the water which in no way disturbed our passage.

By noon we were approaching the large islands in the Gulf of Messenia. The *Papa' Buonaiuto* stopped, six men hauled in the tow rope and the captain told us that lunch was served. We abandoned our ship with some misgiving, but knowing we could easily go back to it if the weather showed signs of getting worse. As the

cook brought in our huge plates of spaghetti I could see through the galley door that *Daphne* was ambling docilely along with a large bone in her teeth. The wine was good and the sea air soporific: after lunch all of us except the helmsman settled down on the warm deck in the shade for a nap.

Toward evening we reached Point Methoni, where we were to leave Greece and steer out to the open sea. The *Papa' Buonaiuto* stopped off the little town of Methoni with its fantastic fortress from the time of the Venetians and we clambered back on board *Daphne*, remarking jokingly, but with a questioning undertone:

"See you in Italy!"

Now for it! We had 300 nautical miles of open sea ahead of us without any sheltering coast or harbor to slink into. If a storm blew up we would have to cast off and fend for ourselves. The moment was also tinged with solemnity, as this hilly point was the last we saw of Greece and our Greek journey was now over. It was a farewell which suddenly intensified all we had experienced during the ten weeks since sighting the hills of Kefalonia. We had had our troubles, of course, but to offset that was the knowledge that our hopes had been fulfilled and exceeded. One thing, however, we had miscalculated: the time had been too short, we had missed and omitted much that we should have seen. We had reached the island paradise of the Cyclades with great effort, but had then sailed quickly through it in a few days. We had left many islands unvisited, from Samothrace in the north to Rhodes and Cyprus in the south. Constantinople, Asia Minor's coast and Egypt—barely a day's journey from Crete—had all been breathtakingly near. Only the most solemn of promises to ourselves to return, to steer *Daphne* back to these waters one summer, could ease the pain of seeing the bare cliffs sink into the sea in our wake.

A northerly swell met us as soon as we got out to sea and made us rather uneasy at the outset. It increased toward evening and took away all appetite for dinner. By degrees the wind got up, and

so did the waves—considerably bigger than those off Candia, but they came from the side and so did not break over us. We spent a very anxious night, keeping watch the whole time, and the morning, cloudy and raw, brought more violent gusts and showed us a leaden sea. The *Papa' Buonaiuto* was rolling and pitching almost as giddily as we, but the towing, which would have been impossible if we had been heading into the wind, was not endangered by any jerks. We set the mainsail to counteract the rolling and before long the forestaysail and spanker as well. That helped a lot, but we were on tenterhooks to know what the weather had in store for us later in the day. Luckily, only continued good will. By noon it cleared, the wind abated and the sea was blue and smiling again, with a swell which gradually died away. We made up for our lost sleep and got up only to make some nourishing *Daphne* soup at sunset. The early autumn night closed in at half-past seven and we snuggled down again in our cozy bunks.

When we woke up the calm sea was glittering in the morning sun and the log showed that the coast was already near. Calabria loomed slowly out of the haze and about eleven o'clock we passed Capo Spartivento: we had come full circle. But whereas on the outward voyage this coast had seemed to us so bleak, poor and sunbaked, now that we saw it again after seventy-five days in Greece we were struck by its fertile and verdant appearance. With its shady trees, its extensive fields and its splendid houses, it welcomed us back both to the north and to European prosperity. Seldom has it been brought home to me so clearly that our judgment, like our sense organs, only registers contrasts and that our experiences are colored more by the past than by the present. The *Papa' Buonaiuto* steered westward toward the Straits of Messina, hugging the coast. At Capo d'Armi a small fishing boat with lateen sails intercepted us; its crew, with gestures as eloquent as only Italians can make them, implored Captain Ghio to tow them through the windy, current-filled straits. The kindhearted captain stopped, and after the fishermen had paid

a tribute of delicious pilot fish to both the *Papa' Buonaiuto* and *Daphne*, Carniglia, the first mate, tossed them a rope and the three of us headed in toward the Sicilian coast, which lay there like a decorative 19th century wallpaper with Etna's pure outline silhouetted against the cloudless sky.

The Straits of Messina met us with a strong head wind and the spray flew up almost as stingingly as when we left Candia. But what did that matter: practiced, blasé tow-ees as we were, we just went into the saloon, where Mona soon produced a delicious lunch consisting of fresh pilot fish fried in oil, washed down with Cretan wine. Now and then we glanced out the portholes and watched the well-known shores—Reggio, Villa San Giovanni, Messina—moving past through the rainbow of the spray. Off the harbor entrance of Messina the fishing boat cast off. When we crossed Charybdis I had to go out and take the tiller to hold *Daphne* on the right course, but it took us only a few minutes to cut across the monster's whirlpool. The northerly wind in the straits made us wonder what lay ahead: if it was blowing just as hard out in the Tyrrhenian Sea we would have to cast off the tow rope. However, once we had the narrow vent hole between Sicily and Calabria behind us the waves smoothed down and soon an infinite, clear-blue, watered-silk expanse stretched ahead of us such as only Italy can offer. We lay down under the awning with our books; the voyage was turning out to be a rest cure. At dusk we passed Stromboli, which was like a huge kiln with its peaceful but unrelenting plume of smoke, while a fleet of lantern boats swarmed out in the velvet darkness, reviving all our old memories of night cruises along the Italian coast.

All night long, in as deep a sleep as Odysseus on the Phaeacians' ship, we glided swiftly and steadily over the sea, and when at last we awoke we were greeted by the same clear sky and blue mirror. At noon the confident chugging ahead of us fell silent and while we continued to glide soundlessly over the smooth water six sun-



burned men hauled in the tow rope under Captain Ghio's supervision:

"Lunch is served!"

As we sat over lunch Capri's double hump emerged out of the haze, more fantastic than ever, a bit of stage scenery floating on the water, gaily painted with cliffs, villas, gardens, zigzag roads and a large, white yacht off Piccola Marina. The Gulf of Naples revealed its famous view toward Vesuvius and Point Sorrento, so enchantingly fresh that all sneering comparisons with glossy picture postcards melted away. We were standing in the little wheelhouse with Captain Ghio, while the chief engineer, Giuseppe Grosso, who hailed from Procida, hung longingly over the railing peering for his native village. Suddenly the captain gave an order to alter course.

"Heavens above, life's short and the lad hasn't been home for six months," he said to us, rather sheepishly. "Sometimes if we're passing one of their homes we anchor for a while without letting on to the company or the customs. I know we're destined direct for Cette, but the harbor master at Procida is Giuseppe's uncle and is sure to turn a blind eye."

Procida, which I knew only from the poetic short story of Bocaccio, in which the daring lover swims across the sound in the moonlight to his beloved on the adjacent Ischia, turned out to be a boldly cut-out volcanic island with a fishing village perched up round a small well-sheltered bay on the southwest side. We saw that our arrival had been noticed the minute we chugged slowly in through the sound to the sunny, indolent harbor with its air of picturesque Neapolitan squalor and congestion. From a dilapidated house on the cliff, hung with washing and joined to a tumbledown rococo church, a large white cloth was flapped in welcome. Was it a mother's sixth sense that had told a half-blind and half-deaf old woman before all the others that the youngest of her twelve children was coming? Through the field glasses Captain Ghio followed the

reactions in the house with a shared delight of which only an Italian, brought up in the expansive family worship of the south, is capable.

"*Ecco la mamma*," he exclaimed as the old woman hobbled out on the terrace, "*ecco la sorella*," as a gaily dressed girl flew down the path to the shore.

Soon the cliff was teeming with brothers, sisters, nephews and nieces and sisters-in-law. The anchor plunged down to the sandy bottom, clearly visible six fathoms under our keel, and the beaming engineer, clad in his Sunday best, climbed into the ship's boat which his pals had launched. During the two hours the happy man was away there was an invasion by all the children in Procida; naked and sunburned they swam out to the ship, overrunning the *Papa' Buonaiuto* completely, prying into every corner, diving from the bridge and sorely trying the child-loving crew's patience. The captain and we rowed to a little sandy beach close by to swim in peace. Punctually to the second Giuseppe returned, laden with grapes from his father's harvest. *Addio mamma, babbo, sorellina* and all the others, *addio* Procida, where all the neighbors and acquaintances could see for themselves that Giuseppe had a good job as engineer on a ship sailing to foreign parts!

We resumed our voyage, passing inside Ischia and watching its wildly romantic fortress, its parasol pines and idyllic crater harbor glide past, and at dusk we headed out to sea again. Another pleasant, restful night with the water bubbling right against our ears merged into another radiant morning on a dead-calm sea, this time somewhere on a level with Rome. We spent most of the day on board the *Papa' Buonaiuto*, pretending it was a fashionable seaside resort by lying on the low part of the 'tween-deck, which was on a level with the sea and lapped by the swell like a beach. At noon a trawler was sighted to port, and as fresh food was running short the captain gave the order to alter course while some of the crew got a barrel ready. When we reached the trawler, a battered hulk from Livorno,

Captain Ghio seized the megaphone and shouted across the water:

"Will you give us some fish tails for fifty liters of the best red wine?"

The men on the trawler did a deal at once. Like most of the fishermen on this coast they were employed for a weekly pittance by a boat-owning capitalist and had no reason to be stingy over the deal. We got a large box of first-rate fish, among which neither tasty shrimps nor delicious small octopuses were missing. Barsotti, the cook, was all agog; after only an hour the first fruits of his labors were ready—small sticks with fried octopuses and shrimps threaded on them. All day long he continued supplying us with masterpieces of Italian cooking to the delight of us all. Meanwhile we indulged in an exciting and unusual sport: dolphin-hunting. Dolphin meat, dried in the sun in long strips and served raw with oil and tomatoes, is a delicacy relished especially by the Genoese and called *musciame*. The difficulty of catching the nimble creatures, however, makes *musciame* a rarity and it is mostly a gift from doughty sea captains of Captain Ghio's type. Armed with a harpoon, he stood for hours at the bow of his ship, which he would direct with eloquent gestures toward every school of dolphins that popped up more or less in the direction we were going. Sometimes they would gambol after us for a bit and then, quick as lightning, the captain would fling his harpoon just as one of them tumbled in the bow-wave, but as a rule the creature was even quicker and glided away unharmed on its sportive journey. Not until many hours of effort were the sharp barbs buried in the back of a fat whopper over three yards long. Then things hummed on board! The captain shouted to the engineer to reverse the engine, but the engineer was standing on deck looking on, while the five other men hauled in the rope attached to the harpoon and Mona and I rushed astern in alarm to stop *Daphne* from ramming the *Papa' Buonaiuto* when the latter pulled up. By degrees everything sorted itself out and we could move on, while our bleeding victim vainly thrashed the deck

with its huge tail. It is only the parts round the spine which are fit for *musciame*, the rest was thrown overboard as food for any sharks that were about.

Toward evening dense banks of clouds piled up in the sky and the barometer fell. Captain Ghio prophesied *libeccio*, but was sure we would reach Elba before it broke. Now that the voyage was almost at an end we dared to speak of the amazing luck we had had. The entire crew agreed that they had never known anything like it during the years they had been on the Greek run. The worthy captain also admitted that he had been worried as to how he could keep his promise. But he would not hear of calling it "luck," *fortuna*; he took us first to his cabin, where a sugary-sweet Madonna was enthroned over the bunk, then to the engine room, where an even sweeter oleograph of the Heavenly Mother gazed sorrowfully down on the Ansaldo Works' 200 horsepower diesel engine, and finally to the wheelhouse, whose Loreto madonna we had already seen.

"You won't find three better madonnas than mine, and every morning and evening during the voyage I've given them each a kiss. They have understood that what I've promised I must also keep."

Impressed by the way three madonnas took part in the daily life on board a modern tanker, we could only thank our friend Ghio warmly for having so wholeheartedly espoused our cause. The imminent parting also raised the question of material compensation for the long towing. To our surprise we came up against an adamant refusal to take anything. All we managed to do was to give a small sum to the crew as shore-leave money at the next port, otherwise we were friends and even had to accept as a present two demijohns of wine, a large dolphin *musciame* and duty-free cigarettes. Half a dozen *musciami* were taken on board *Daphne* as gifts to Ghio's relations and friends at Sestri; we were to part company at Elba, the *Papa' Buonaiuto* going north of Corsica to Cette and we doing the last hundred nautical miles to Rapallo on

our own. At nightfall we sighted Monte Christo's hilly little island. The sky was now quite overcast with the gathering storm and brooded loweringly over the smooth sea. When the beacon at the little port of Marina di Campo on Elba's south coast emerged out of the darkness I tried to start *Daphne's* engine before we cast off. In vain: for some reason the batteries had run down. Ghio waved reassuringly: if we've brought you as far as this we'll see you right there. The harbor authorities at Campo were deep in a sweet sleep when the *Papa' Buonaiuto* anchored in the bay. The ship's boat was launched and, rowed by two stalwart men, it towed *Daphne* in to the quay, where she was moored by the stern without Mona or I being allowed to lift a finger. There was no mistaking the fact that both parties were genuinely moved at the moment of parting, for the sea dog Ghio gave not only Mona but me too a whole series of smacking kisses on both cheeks, and when the little stern light which had faithfully watched over us for six nights on the boundless sea now vanished in the darkness, leaving us standing on the quay, we felt that a part of ourselves would always sail on a sunny Mediterranean with this floating wine barrel and its friendly crew.

During the night the *libeccio* broke, the wind howled, the sea roared and, snug in our bunks, we could further meditate on our luck—or the three madonnas' susceptibility to Ghio's kisses. When the harbor master came on board in the morning we knew our real triumph:

"Port of departure and date? Oh, Candia, September 9th. That was a quick run."

"Yes, especially as we never once used our engine; it's out of order."

Marina di Campo is a small community between fishing village and tourist resort, with a winding high street bordered by picturesque old houses and with two modern but quite unpretentious hotels by the water. It also has a small harbor where smacks load, a sandy beach, stone pine wood and all around a horizon of moderately

high mountains with fertile vineyards. On us, coming from Crete, Elba made a positively Scandinavian impression, with the autumn coloring in the trees, its fields and grassy ditches, its farms with sloping tile roofs and its cool air filled with a moist, earthy smell. We lifted the *Lambretta* ashore and for a few days drove around this charming island, Napoleon's miniature kingdom, with the capital, Portoferraio, where his little residential seat, like a manor, is the chief sight, with roads winding across the vine-clad hills and with deeply cut out bays where prosperous "marinas" reflected their houses in the water. It is surprising that so few tourists find their way to this island, which has all the originality and beauty that the mainland Riviera with its villas and hideous hotels has lost.

We were in no particular hurry as we had gained so much time on the return voyage, but after a while we started north, as soon as we got the engine going again. Our route took us via the islands of Capraia and Gorgona, both very beautiful, but not so attractive from a tourist point of view owing to the penal settlements there. Mildly edified by a conversation with one or two convicts on Gorgona, where a revolt had just been quelled, we went on to old and well-known Portovenere. In its excellent, roomy harbor we came in for a severe autumn storm before completing the last stage of the voyage to Rapallo. And so the familiar coastline appeared again with Portofino on its point and the shipyard at Lavagna to starboard, the whole of the welcoming Gulf of Rapallo. As always when returning home from a long journey, everything seemed much smaller and more colorless than when we left it. Understandable though it was that these shores, houses and people all summer long had stayed in the same place while we had floated about on the sea, it did give us a certain feeling of superiority, increased by our finding, behind the little jetty at Rapallo, the entire armada of yachts just as we had left them, idly reflecting their spotlessly painted sides in the water. One well-known head after the other popped up out of fo'c'sles and galleys, and interested greetings such

as "*Buon ritorno!* Had a good voyage?" were called to us as soon as we had made fast in our old spot. With ill-feigned casualness we mentioned that we had been to Crete and asked what sort of summer they had had.

"Very good," replied the seaman on *Fiammetta*. "Except for one week, when the *commendatore* (the owner of the yacht) took it into his head to sail to Cannes. Luckily we never got farther than San Remo, where the ladies wanted to turn back."

"We went for a really long cruise this year," said the *Maristella's* seaman, who had once been on the Australian run. "All the way to Elba and with twenty people on board."

"We've only been to Portofino and Sestri," the engineer of *Capriccio*, a twenty-ton motorboat, informed us. "Been nice and quiet otherwise, the marquis is a sensible man."

All at once it dawned on us that these sailors, far from admiring our Odyssey, pitied us just as the Phaeacians pitied Odysseus when he reached their heaven-blessed isle after his wanderings. To these heirs of a classic philosophy of life, as to most of the Italians, our northern love of hardships, long voyages and new horizons was almost an unhealthy mania, a sign of an unbalanced mind. The thought that Homer, Aeschylus, Plato and all the other sages of antiquity would probably have regarded us in the same light did not make it easier to justify our venture to ourselves. The fact that a *wanderlust* and a tourist attitude are, at least in part, an expression of our culture's critical situation, of the rift that has opened between us and existence, cannot be denied.

The great illusion of our age, the dream of salvation, is that we can stand outside—outside our environment, our thoughts, ourselves. Everywhere we try to bring about the ideal distance between observer and observed which characterizes the scientist's relation to his study material or the artist's to his work. It is true that people also speak of "involvement," "subjectivity," or "vitalism," but as a rule it is only a more subtle way of placing yourself outside, you

change the whole problem into an objective theory, you speculate over it instead of living it. The striving to get outside is actually present everywhere in modern cultural life: every book we read is a display of the author's ability to "master objectively," "to mold artistically," or in some other way to make himself master of a material which is often his so-called personality. The newspapers and the radio induce in every individual the flattering notion that he, sitting in his comfortable chair, is an all-seeing observer of world events, and step by step science is reducing the universe to an engineering object. No wonder we are gradually beginning to think that we really are outside and even in our daily life are beginning to act as if we were sitting over a chessboard: choice of vocation, sexual life, marriage, political opinions, they are all "problems" which we imagine we can solve from our high, impartial standpoint, and we no longer remember that deep significance which the concepts of destiny and providence had for our forefathers, who childishly believed that they were human beings and had not yet discovered that they were abstract speculation.

One of the favorite domains of "striving outward" is the relationship to so-called "natural beauty," which in everyday life people try to worship in the form of picturesque, beautiful or evocative "views." Just as every house in ancient times had its altar for the household gods, we build our houses so that the windows, if possible, enable us to share the beauty of the surroundings, whether it is a lake, a garden or street scene. The main thing is that we can carry out our religion, feel that we are seeing a significant part of existence but at the same time isolated from it. Unfortunately something happens in this connection which is usually glossed over because it so disconcertingly counteracts our striving: the glorious view of lake or shore, for which the head of the family paid a fortune when buying the building site, gradually grows so familiar that the people in the house no longer notice it, they are unable to look at it with the objective eye that aesthetic enjoyment re-



quires. It is the same with the expensive pictures in the drawing room: they become neutral, a part of the wall, and it is only when guests come that the head of the family, through their surprised admiration, can again enjoy his treasures. Architects nowadays have coined a good expression for this blunting of the aesthetic sense: they say that the view *wears out*, and try to be a little more sparing about bringing it into the room. The only sure way of retaining one's view is to keep it up in a lookout tower which is seldom visited. In the same way the wise Chinese keep their works of art locked away for the most part and only take them out at times of contemplation.

What is meant by a landscape's "wearing out"? Simply that it ceases to be strange, that it is absorbed and becomes a part of the living organism. The farmer who finds his way in the dark across the yard to the stable, harnesses the horse and drives to the dairy without seeing the road is the opposite of the aesthete and illustrates the natural attitude to the surrounding world, the attitude of all firmly rooted people, whether they live facing the world's most beautiful or most dismal view. It is another matter altogether that environment imperceptibly—just because it is absorbed—affects people, and that a Ligurian fisherman has quite a different view of life from his cousin who works in a factory in Milan. In that sphere architects and town planners have a task of more moment than the trapping of "impressions of beauty" around people's everyday life.

Man therefore reacts naturally against the aesthetic attitude and the artificial estrangement it tries to introduce between him and the world. But the "outside cult" will not give in. Aesthetic estrangement may be threatened in every one of its conquests—its faithful adepts are ever ready to battle for it anew. If one gets too deeply into the rut of daily life one goes for outings into the country or on journeys to strange places and conditions, where everything is again a surprise and picture for the enraptured spectator-enthusiast.

The tourist is thus a mystic who seeks his state of grace just as devoutly as the man in olden times who sought to know God. The only difference is that while Christianity reminded churchgoers that they were human beings, a tourist trip does its utmost to make its devotees forget it. The new religion is antihuman and is therefore in opposition to the whole of our western tradition.

All this may be taken as a criticism of the urge that led us out on our voyage, a deep and ineradicable urge acquired during the early and decisive years when our destiny is shaped, however much we may try to kick against the pricks in later years. I cannot deny that, for me, life's most intense moments of joy have been those when it has been possible to regard existence aesthetically and I have had the brief illusion of being completely outside. For the most part, these moments have been during my travels down in the south. It is true that I grew up by a northern sea which has rolled millions of waves against the shores where I dreamed my youthful dreams, but they are all silenced by a single wave which broke on a Mediterranean beach during my first trip to Italy. If any one episode can illustrate traveling as a mystic experience, it is the simple story of this wave. I was going by train from Palermo to Messina. Somewhere near Cefalù, where the line runs along the actual seashore, the train slowed down for some reason and gradually came to a halt. The sun was shining and I leaned out of the window. For a moment, perhaps half a minute, we stood still, the sound of the wheels and the puffing of the engine stopped. During the short pause, in which I felt time stand still, a wave boomed against the sandy beach, and I was aware of the blue infinity of the sea and the salt tang of the air. Never before or since have I had such a feeling of existing—undoubtedly because I was existing as little as possible: instead, everything had become conscious experience for me. Since then I have read of similar experiences of Marcel Proust, Jules Romains and Sartre, from which these authors draw widely differing conclusions. Sartre's inability to see the

aesthetic character of this experience is one of the reasons why his doctrine is unconsciously becoming a new romanticism.

If, therefore, traveling is essentially the result of false ideals and a warped upbringing, it can also be said that, in a world which is already so degenerate as ours, a journey wholeheartedly enjoyed can have a beneficial effect. There are people who are so infected by "outward striving" that they have become utter strangers to themselves, irresponsible and disloyal in their own actions and used to regarding not only their environment but their whole existence as a stopgap. Such people are apt to sink into a moral decline for which they believe they cannot be called to account because they themselves are aware of it and acknowledge it. Other people—often the most sensitive and easily hurt—never dare to live at all; they go through life like shadows, never quite here, never forging their own happiness, often admirably patient in the face of trials which affect their real selves as little as the frugal joy which life after all vouchsafes them. They are the martyrs and victims of the outward religion. I shall never forget the words spoken half wistfully, half ironically by an elderly relation, now dead, one spring long ago when my brother and sister and I came home from the woods with the first primroses:

"Just fancy, I can't remember that I have ever picked primroses!"

Small though we were, we understood that this utterance had a deeper truth than the literal one. To pick primroses is to accept spring's arrival, to feel spring. Had our aunt really been one of those who denied life even as a child, or was it the perspective of later years which colored her memory?

For all these people, for all those who are not strong or uncomplicated enough really to live their lives, travel to foreign lands is a chance and a way out. Gone the pressure of ingrained habits and environment, gone the thousand claims on our freedom, gone the

embarrassing witnesses who know our weaknesses: the tourist's existence is an easy exercise for those who fail in the big examination. It is, moreover, spiced with a thousand stimulants. Travel makes us flower, we expand to the world and even learn the hardest lesson of all: to accept ourselves. Our happiness in this regained contact, in the realization that life is infinitely richer if it is lived and not merely endured, is often so strong that it successfully allays our doubts even after we come home. In this way travel is a school, a preparation for a more genuine everyday life. But even if we never succeed in changing our existence like this, even if the need to escape into denial makes itself felt anew, our journey has not been in vain. The expression *Et in Arcadia ego* is usually given a nostalgic meaning, but it also has a proud and grateful one: once I stood on the Acropolis, once a shepherd's pipe welcomed me to Greece. For the real tragedy is never to have been in Arcady, never to have picked primroses, never to have reconciled oneself to life.

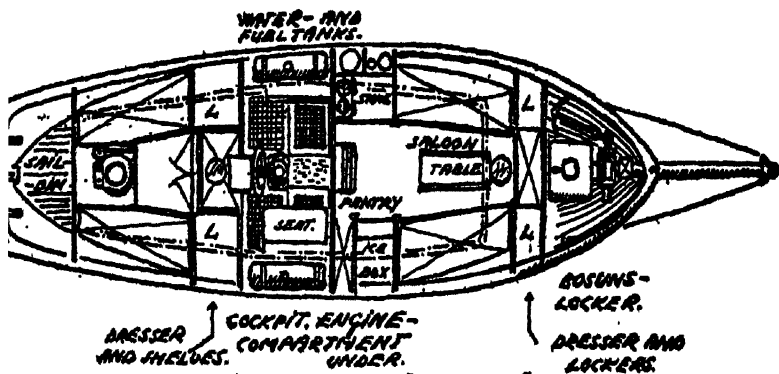
Does travel need any further defense? In a world where distances, through the development of technology, have shrunk in an undreamed-of way, it is now as necessary to travel as it formerly was to get to know the immediate environs of one's own town. We read with due superiority of the narrowminded local patriotism which made the Greek city-states, always quarreling among themselves, an easy prey for Macedonians and Romans, we wonder at the fanaticism which made Italy's Ghibellines and Guelphs call in foreign powers to punish the neighboring cities, but we ourselves, with all our experience, are incapable of realizing the European unity which all of us in theory desire. There is every reason—political, economic and human—why the United States of Europe should be proclaimed. The same civilization, the Greek and Christian, the same social experience and structure, the same hopes and risks for the future, characterize an area of land which in size, if it is measured by means of communication, is smaller than most of the empires a hundred years ago. But emotionally we are still at the

stage of village patriotism for which everything outside our own front door is foreign and half hostile. How long will it be before we learn that our present homelands are villages in which we were born and where we feel particularly at home, but that our homeland is Europe? Up to now all attempts to bring this unity about politically have stranded on the individual citizens' inner resistance and emotional confinement to a narrowminded nationalism. What is needed, therefore, is a practical Europeanism, an increased personal contact between peoples, partly in the form of travel.

For my own part I can say that, if at first I went to southern Europe because it pulled me with the magic of all that is foreign and exotic, the time spent in these countries, getting to know their people and scenery, has resulted in something which I do not hesitate to call feeling at home. To feel at home in France, to look on Paris as their city and to make its cultural traditions their own, is something which countless Scandinavians have already done. For me, this was the first lesson in Europeanism. Since then, fortunate circumstances have allowed me by degrees to widen my domains, not least by voyaging with *Daphne* along the Mediterranean coasts. When we, with all our flags flying, sailed into Rapallo's harbor that autumn, therefore, it was with the same proud feelings that filled ancient conquerors when, after a successful summer campaign with their armada, they anchored in the harbor they had left one spring day. Our Europe had grown during the preceding months by a large province rich in tradition: Greece with all its islands. As a garrison and frontier guard we had left behind there all the auxiliary troops of understanding and sympathy at our command. It was quite a safe policy, for we knew that old and trustworthy troops were waiting for us in Italy, which we had already subjugated. The next summer a new province and as our final goal a united Europe—if not in reality, at least in the hearts of two of its citizens.

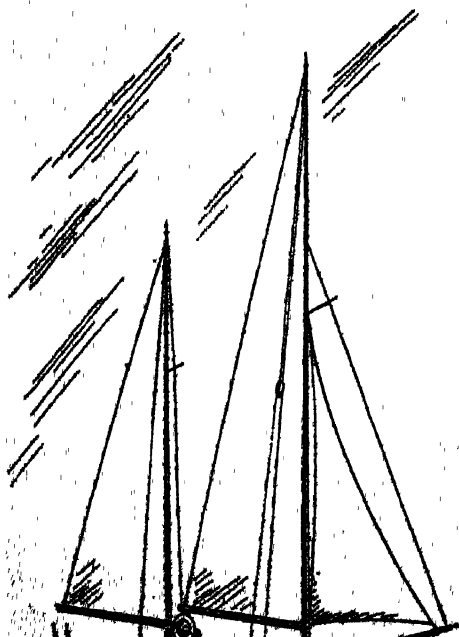




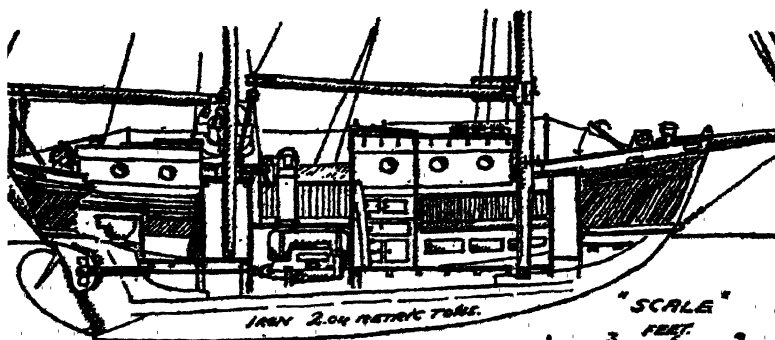
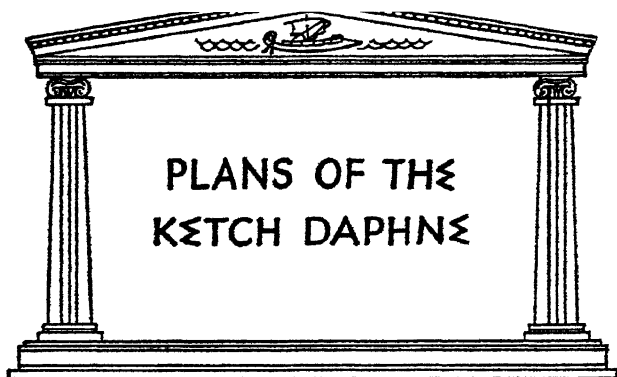


AUXILIARY KETCH "DAPHNE"  
BUILT 1936 BY ABO BATYRAF AB, FINLAND  
MATERIAL: PEROX ON BUILT-UP OAK  
FRAMES. SUPERSTRUCTURES  
MANGANESE.

**MATERIAL: PEROB ON BUILT-UP OAK-  
FRAMES. SUPERSTRUCTURES  
MANGONNY.**







L.O.B: 34 FEET  
B.B.D: 9' 4"  
L.W.L: 28' 4"  
DRAFT: 4' 9"  
DISPL: 6.10 MTONS  
REG. NO: 48 192